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'Dare to be different, dare to progress:
a case study of a Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit 2009-12'.

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(c) The data and results presented are the genuine data and results actually obtained by me during the conduct of the research

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Note

Extract from Code of Practice: If the research degree is set within a broader programme of work involving a group of investigators – particularly if this programme of work predates the candidate's registration – the candidate should provide an explicit statement (in an 'Acknowledgments' section) of the respective roles of the candidate and these other individuals in relevant aspects of the work reported in the thesis. For example, it should make clear, where relevant, the candidate's role in designing the study, developing data collection instruments, collecting primary data, analysing such data, and formulating conclusions from the analysis. Others involved in these aspects of the research should be named, and their contributions relative to that of the candidate should be specified (this does not apply to the ordinary supervision, only if the supervisor or supervisory team has had greater than usual involvement).

Annex 81, Declaration   v2, 200911

Abstract

'Dare to be different, dare to progress' explores the educational experiences of a group of 14 – 16 year old students referred to a pupil referral unit (PRU) during the period 2009 – 2012 using both quantitative and qualitative data sources. The quantitative data gathered from school files, the Local Authority's school performance data and police records enabled a statistical exploration of recorded information pertaining to issues of attainment and progress, attendance, exclusions, deprivation factors and contacts with police. The qualitative data enabled rich contextual information and was gathered from fieldwork involving the researcher's observations, four group interviews involving four teachers and four teaching assistants and thirteen paired interviews with nine volunteer students. Willis (1977) showed how 'the lads' used their social class identities to forge social class relations acting out resistant behaviours in the process in preparation for and perpetuating a working-class lifestyle or culture. This study resonated with my work at the PRU and the impetus to take it further developed during a secondment to the local Youth Offending Service where I observed a high proportion of PRU students were also known to the police and other children's services. Bourdieu's (1984, 1990, 1992) works on habitus, capital and field were influential in shaping the theoretical and conceptual framework around 'class' and 'culture'. Skeggs' (1997, 2004) concepts of inscription and identity formation and Quinn's (2010) concept of imagined social capital contributed to this too. The research is unique to a particular group of young people in a particular setting and combined statistics, field notes, photographs and dialogue thus indicating ethnographic case study methodology (Merriam 1988). The research found that 'class' remains the strongest indicator of educational achievement and cultural capital, but the cultural influences of youth and identity, and deprivation alongside low aspirations and expectations exacerbate the situation.

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Abbreviations

ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
AP	Alternative Provision
ASB	Antisocial Behaviour
ASBO	Antisocial Behaviour Order
ATL	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
BERA	British Education Research Association
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CMIS	Computer Management Information System
CrASBO	Criminal Antisocial Behaviour Order
CSJ	Centre for Social Justice
DCFS	Department for Children, Families and Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DfE	Department for Education
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
ECM	Every Child Matters
EOTAS	Educated other than at school
ERA	Education Reform Act
FAP	Fair Access Panel
FFT	Fischer Family Trust
FSM	Free School Meals
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
KS	Key Stage
LA	Local Authority
NC	National Curriculum
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NS-SeC	National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification
Ofsted/OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
ONS	Office for National Statistics
Pex	Permanently excluded
PRU	Pupils Referral Unit
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
SATs	Standardised assessment tests
SEAL	Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
SEBD	Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties
SEF	Self-Evaluation Form
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
SFR	Statistical First Release
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
TAC	Team Around the Child
TES	Times Education Supplement
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Programme
YOS	Youth Offending Service
YRO	Youth Rehabilitation Order
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

Introduction

Dare is a word loaded with meaning. To dare, take or do a dare involves challenge and risk and/or courage and having the impudence to defy and to resist compliance or conformity. Take, for example, the British Special Air Service (SAS), which is known the world over as a fearsome, elite fighting force with the equally famous motto 'Who Dares Wins'. Their stories of adventure, bravery, courage and boldness identify the brotherhood of daredevils who serve in 'The Regiment'. But amongst their arsenal of strategies for which they are also known are feats of sabotage and subversion, recruiting dissidents and gathering intelligence. The word d*are* is steeped in issues of image, identity and status, and as such resonates with the bold learners who find themselves placed outside mainstream education in pupil referral units (PRUs), which are a form of alternative education managed initially by local education authorities as part of their response to their statutory obligations. This sector of education emerged following an accumulation of concerns, policies and interventions aimed at addressing the issue of educating 'children not in school', and is explained further in Chapter 1, which also looks at how social exclusion links to school exclusion and the materialisation of PRUs.

The intention was not to 'militarise' or romanticise the students at the heart of this project, but to emphasise their need for a sense of belonging and the risky or daring nature of marginalised young people in resisting learning and dealing with social exclusion, which is also embedded in cultural issues of image and identity. 'Dare to be different, dare to progress' encapsulates the influences that a group of young people faced and experienced in striving to be different but being eager to belong, whilst at the same time protecting their burgeoning images and identities – and make progress in learning. Willis's (1977) acclaimed ethnographic case study 'Learning to Labour' explored the actions and attitudes of a group of working-class boys – 'the lads' – who were characterised by their behaviours, which were both acts of resistance and compliance:

> '… which always stop just short of outright confrontation. Settled in class, as near a
>
> group as they can manage, there is a continuous scraping of chairs, bad tempered 'tut-

tutting' at the simplest request, and a constant fidgeting about which explores every permutation of sitting or lying on a chair.' (Willis 1977, p13)

Yet, young people have a different view of the world about them, as shown by the following quotes from two students who participated in this research:

'… [*school*] … a place where they put us to go and learn what we don't want to …'
(Jess, PRU student)

'... a teacher doesn't know you for yourself, really. They see you ... some part ... for a few hours a day ... so they don't know ... when you try and explain things ... say like if somebody kicked off and say I know how to deal with them, but they [*teachers*] didn't and they thought they did ... and I explained ... they they're like: no, no, no ... they *[teachers]* get arsy ...' (Dan, PRU student)

As an interpretivist researcher, my interest was in what meaning the students made of the world around them and how they got to that perspective. To limit overt bias in my value judgements, I approached this research on the basis of the following four assumptions, which are illustrated in the two student quotes above: a) students make meaning within their social circumstances; b) the meaning they make is valid from their perspective within a particular time and space; c) structure and agency both inform and deform their life chances; and d) teachers' and young people's views have equal merit, although they occupy different hierarchical positions within structures of educational provision.   These four ontological principles were my compass in making judgements in relation to the evidence and unconscious bias. Therefore, when I saw cruel or antisocial acts or actions, I tried to remain 'true' to my professional values when I disciplined students to highlight the structures that shape their behaviour so that it was more prosocial and enhanced their life chances. It was not simply punitive or at worst malicious. This approach was useful because it enabled me to put personal values at the core of my work, whether I was in the role of Head Teacher, manager, leader, Ofsted Inspector, or classroom practitioner.

I will more fully explain the emergence of pupil referral units in Chapter 1, but for present contextual purposes, they were part of the Special Education Needs (SEN) sector and provided education to those state-maintained children, pupils and students who were unable to learn in mainstream schools. This study aimed to explore the reasons behind why students were referred to one particular PRU, what kept them there until compulsory schooling ended and what the young people had to say about their experiences. The focus of the research centred on the lived experiences of a group of 14- to 16-year-old students who attended a PRU between 2009 and 2012. To get at those lived experiences, I tackled the study from three aspects: the issues with school systems and structures around 'standards', which ultimately excluded these students; the environmental/familial factors which shaped the values and attitudes of the students; and the views of students themselves. To structure the investigations, I arrived at three research questions:

- How is the educational progression of students explained, monitored, tracked and used in the PRU setting?

This question was framed to explore the following: notions of attainment (national performance descriptors expressed as key stage level targets); achievement (what was accomplished in relation to the attainment targets); and progression (the rate and pace of learning) as they are defined by the school standards literature (http://www.education.gov.uk/vocabularies/educationtermsandtags/, 2014). PRUs are inspected against the same data-driven inspection frameworks that are used for mainstream schools. The research shows that learning data was often patchy and inaccurate, and school information tended to focus on behavioural issues rather than learning. Closing the attainment gap was a significant challenge for students and teaching staff.

- What critical external and environmental factors impact on achievement, attainment and behaviour?

I conceptualised the PRU as a 'social field', and through this question attempted to identify *how* and *why* issues of class (social stratification based around social and economic divisions), culture (lifestyle and

values) and resistance (counter-school culture: Willis, 1977) impact on the students and their learning. The conceptual and theoretical framework is explained in Chapter 2, where I explore Bourdieu's (1984) concepts of 'class', 'capital' and 'habitus' and Quinn's (2010) extension of Bourdieu to incorporate 'imagined social capital' as a way of interpreting the behaviours of the target group of students. The PRU sits in a much larger social field of education whereby government-determined social and educational policy converge, affecting the organisation and delivery of services as well as outcomes. This locates the PRU in the public policy and professional practice arena of educational sociology. Methodologically, the study posed challenges in determining the approach, i.e. should it be an ethnographic study or a case study? The rationale for the selection is detailed in Chapter 3, but it resulted in a combination of both approaches to produce an ethnographic-orientated case study that explores the views of students and the teachers and teaching assistants working with them.

● What do students have to say about their experiences of education?

My approach to this question was based on the assumption that 14- to 16-year-old PRU students do not naturally or usually articulate their perceptions of 'class' and 'culture' in sociological parlance. Therefore, I had to look for meaning in what they said and try to find ways of identifying the artefacts of their life that would reflect 'class' and 'culture'. In addition to a pretested framework of interview questions, observations and statistics, I also introduced photographic evidence, which is explained in Chapter 3 (Methodology) and Chapter 4 (Students' perceptions …'). I aimed to get at how class, culture and resistance worked towards shaping the educational experiences and outcomes for this particular group of students.

The study focuses on a single PRU located in a post-16 college and was conducted on site between 2009 and 2012; it involved paired two-session interviews with eight students and one individual student, two interview sessions with a group of four teachers and a further two interview sessions with a group of five teaching assistants. Each of the student meetings were then followed up with a review meeting to check the accuracy of the transcripts, but for the adults this was done by issuing copies of the transcripts and inviting comment. The research outcomes contribute to the growing body of knowledge about PRUs as

specialist educational provisions and social spaces. The originality of the research lies in the methodology of blending the quantitative and qualitative approaches for gathering and interpreting information within the conceptual and theoretical framework identified in Chapter 2.

Chapter Overview

This research project works with reviews of related discourses involving the emergence of pupil referral units and school exclusion, habitus, capital, class, culture and resistance and how these issues relate to the experiences of a particular group of young people as told by themselves and others. Not all children and young people receive their education from formal or mainstream schools, and this may be for a number of reasons: illness or disability, parents electing to educate them at home, they are school-age mothers or pregnant schoolgirls, or are pupils who cannot adjust or cope with mainstream schooling.   This project was concerned with those publicly funded children who refused to go to school and who were rejected by schools.

In Chapter 1, social and school exclusion are explained in the context of social and political developments around education and how the responses of some children to the pressures of schooling and growing up can subject them to antisocial behaviour by adults and systems (symbolic violence) as a means of forcing compliance. The chapter focuses on how equalities policies or, rather more accurately – inequalities – create exclusion. The political drive to improve school standards induced pressures that some children either resist or cannot cope with – resulting in the ultimate school punishment of exclusion. 'Attainment' and 'progress' as measures of educational 'achievement' or success, and disaffection, are explained. For some children, exclusion results in a change of school and a fresh start; for others a different type of provision replaces the mainstream experience and they become 'educated other than at school' through local authority arrangements commonly referred to as alternative provision or pupil referral units (PRUs). The final section of this chapter will expand more fully on what PRUs are. Through this exploration, recurring themes of identity, class, culture and resistance emerge which takes the literature review into Chapter 2, where the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study comes into focus.

Chapter 2 takes a more detailed view of class and culture as the basis for the theoretical and conceptual framework for the research enterprise. It begins with a traditional view of the social class structure and a more recent interpretation before moving on to issues of class conflict and identity and the impact of class on educational attainment. The review then takes account of what is meant by culture, with emphasis taken from Bourdieu's work on habitus, capital and field and Quinn's (2010) 'imagined social capital'. Of particular importance is the effect of culture on youth identity, including a gendered perspective and, again, the impact on learning outcomes amid the dynamics of the classroom as a field in which these different features are played out – often on a daily basis. Running through this section are themes of inequalities, power relations and resistance, which then lead into the next chapter and the strategy for addressing how these features are identified.

Chapter 3 focuses on the design and methodologies of the research located in the naturalist or interpretivist approach. In this chapter, I look at ethnographic and case study approaches and the situated role of the researcher in a specialist educational provision – and at the tensions that can cause bias in this type of research. Consequently, I considered issues of validity and how bias can be reduced. Unlike Willis, I was a permanent member of staff with invested, legitimised authority and access to information that would have been unavailable at the time of Willis's study because: a) the latent developments in technology and b) assessment practice was not standardised then. This enabled me to use quantitative and qualitative data in a unique setting, which then created an original piece of research. Because the study had a principal objective of establishing a view of the students' experiences, from which interpretations relating to class, culture and resistance were drawn, the process of gathering dialogical evidence was important. In seeking ways to do this, I looked at the advantages of and difficulties in using narrative as a methodology as opposed to semi-structured interviews. A further strategy used to identify weaknesses and potential bias was the operation of a pilot study beforehand. Cross-verification of the evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources (triangulation) was used to reduce bias in the final analysis.

Chapter 4 describes the main empirical study, detailing the data sources, approaches and outcomes of the enterprise. Quantitative and qualitative data from four different cohorts of 14- to 16-year-olds was

gathered and evaluated in relation to the research questions, resulting in conclusions and recommendations to bring the project to a close.

Throughout the text, the terms 'young person' and 'young people' are used to describe teenagers mainly of school age but not exclusively. The term 'children and young people' is adopted in reference to primary and secondary age groups collectively; 'pupil(s)' is used in relation to primary and Key Stage 3 children and 'students' is reserved for 14- to 16-year-olds or Key Stage 4.

Chapter 1: Children not in school

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) specified and legalised fifty-four articles designed to protect the rights of children to enable them to grow up safe, happy and healthy. The Convention was applicable in the UK from January 1992, and stated that children had the right to a childhood, an education, to be healthy, to be treated fairly and to be heard. 'In England, education is compulsory but school is not' (DCSF 2007, p4), and it is accepted practice for some to be educated at home or in other forms of provision. Most children attend school, but when they do not it is for one of three main reasons: a) because they are unable to, b) because they do not want to, or c) because schools will not let them. The focus in this chapter is on the latter two categories where there is an element of choice for the child and the school. School exclusion is exclusive to children, but it is also part of the much wider phenomenon of social exclusion (the practice of systematically marginalising sectors of society from rights and entitlement, and opportunities and resources). Through school exclusion, children experience first-hand system rejection and in some instances reinforcement of social exclusion if they and their family are already subject to it.

This chapter will begin by reviewing social inequalities and social exclusion, because these affect families in deprivation and contribute to shaping attitudes well before children reach school. An exploration of the negative aspects of academic performance, school discipline, behaviour and attendance will reveal how the standards agenda contributed to or resulted in school exclusion and how alternative forms of education emerged and evolved during the late 1990s and early 2000s in response to managing children and young people who did not fit with the mainstream model.

Social exclusion

Skeggs (2004) wrote, 'Social exclusion was in part defined by the quantification of the unemployed' (p85) and that it was then institutionalised through government agencies such as the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), which was set up by New Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair in 1997. The SEU (2004) defined social exclusion as:

'… what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked

problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime,

poor health and family breakdown.' (p2)

Government-data-generated reports, which Skeggs (2004, p86) noted identified '… truancy and "school exclusion", street living, and the worst housing estates' as specific aspects of social exclusion and inequalities. Fairclough (2000) emphasised the preoccupation with presenting data rather than explaining cause and effect, which exposed and isolated significant areas of society, making problematic the 'condition' people were in. MacDonald and Marsh (2001) described social exclusion as a 'short-hand label' applied by others to describe urban areas and their inhabitants, which, according to Archer et al. (2010), encompass '… both material deprivation and the inability to participate in the ordinary social and political activities of everyday life' (p4). Material deprivation (poverty) and social exclusion are controversial terms, often used in tandem to convey an undesirable state that the occupants need help to get away from, thus illustrating divisions in social structure.

The UK manufacturing base has been in decline since the early 20th century (Pike and Barnes 1996, p10) and has been exacerbated by recessions such as those in 1980–1981, the early 1990s and, more recently, 2008. According to Archer et al. (2010), in a climate of economic change the shrinking manufacturing base dramatically resulted in fewer jobs, particularly for young people. In 1997, New Labour began to produce a raft of policies and initiatives designed to upskill the nation's workforce based on a knowledge economy which rendered '… the socially excluded as those who cannot, or increasingly, will not be part of the economic and educational "mainstream"' (ibid., p4). In addition to a national policy framework and work shortages, Archer et al. (2010) also identified two other components involved in creating social exclusion: media interest and risk.   Media attention contributes to social exclusion by publicising reports and portraying usually the worst of living conditions in deprived and disadvantaged urban areas, which '… transfer to urban schools and infect the identity work of their young students' (ibid., p2).   Archer et al. (2010) said that 'risk' is a central concern of education policy and practice, and this has been apparent in legislation aimed at protecting and safeguarding children by managing and controlling present and future

danger. They argue that 'risk' '… can be more usefully conceptualised as the product of sociocultural processes and must be understood in relation to social identities and inequalities (ibid., p9). Therefore 'risky' behaviours, which are frequently referred to as 'challenging' or 'daring', have evolved along with a host of protective systems through cultural developments in society (O'Dougherty Wright et al., 2013).

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│ National policy and │                              │ Media attention fuels│
│ initiatives target  │◄───────────────────────────►│ popular perceptions, │
│ interventions at the│                              │ misconceptions and   │
│ young/disadvantaged,│                              │ stereotypes, further │
│ creating, enhancing │                              │ promoting social     │
│ and exposing social │                              │ disparity            │
│ differences and     │                              │                      │
│ inequalities        │                              │                      │
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        │                  │ or socially  │                 │
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│ Decline in work     │                              │ Risk-focused/risk-   │
│ opportunities for the│                             │ aversion society tuned in│
│ young affects working│                             │ to pre-empting danger│
│ class and lower middle│◄──────────────────────────►│ and introducing further│
│ class in particular │                              │ policies and early   │
│                     │                              │ interventions to     │
│                     │                              │ minimise impact      │
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Fig. 1   How marginalised groups are formed, based on Archer et al.'s (2010) interpretation

The interaction of these four components with each other (Fig.1) forces certain elements of society out of the mainstream – a prison without walls that is difficult to escape from. This process of marginalisation produces the phenomenon of *social positioning*, which is an important aspect of class and culture. Resistance to joining the economic and educational mainstream implies choice and is integral to perceptions of self and identity. How individuals perceive themselves and others results in labelling and positioning. Negative labelling and positioning produces stigmatisation, which according to Wright et al. (2010, p54) is also '… a form of social exclusion':

'… it has been argued that the impact of stigmatising attitudes on the stigmatised individual can vary in form and intensity, but often involve consequential patterns of discrimination and prejudice, which serve to separate and exclude individuals from society … .' (ibid., p54)

In this respect, deviant- or stigma-labelling affects social identity and dignity and limits access to learning by creating barriers and lowers self-esteem. It shapes the perceptions an individual forms about themselves and the world around them. Ball et al. (2000) explains that social exclusion is not a term used by young people about themselves, but it is an applied term used by some adults about others. When it is applied to young people, Sibley (1995) says that it gives the young people an 'othered' identity which can affect their sense of self-worth because they are being compared to the 'included', i.e. the privileged or mainstream. Social exclusion is insidious for those that are thus situated.

Social exclusion is a policy term for the impact of the unequal distribution of wealth, power and status; school exclusion is different because it exclusively results from a rejection of 'behaviour' by adults and is applied to children by adults.   It is what Thomson et al. (2002) described as a 'critical moment' and a significant event that Sparkes (1999) and Hall-Lande et al. (2007) suggested leads to greater risk of later disadvantage and social isolation. In this respect, I would argue that school exclusion actually contributes to social exclusion by denying students their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum as offered in mainstream school education, limiting the excluded students' social experiences of mainstream school and reinforcing the threat of widening the attainment gap, thus making matters worse, not better.   With this in mind, I now turn to school exclusion, explaining the responsibilities of schools and the impact they have on the young people affected by them.

School exclusion

UK law states that only the Head Teacher can exclude and only for disciplinary reasons (DfE, 2012). This may take the form of fixed periods away from the school or permanent exclusion; a ban from certain sectors of the school premises; and for misbehaviour outside the school. Any exclusion has to be in line with principles of administrative law and the European Convention of Human Rights (DfE 2012). There are additional considerations for children with special educational needs (SEN) under the SEN Code of Practice (2001) and also for looked after children, as these groups are particularly vulnerable to the impact of school exclusion. The statutory guidance for Head Teachers (DfE 2012) also points out that it is unlawful for children to be excluded because of additional unmet needs or poor learning outcomes, or because they have failed to meet specific conditions prior to reinstatement, or because of the actions of their parents. The statutory guidance also highlights unofficial or informal exclusions such as sending children home to 'cool off' as unlawful and that any incidence of exclusion must be formally recorded. Schools are able to direct a pupil off-site for educational interventions to improve conduct and can also arrange a 'managed move' to another school with consent from all parties involved. However, statutory guidance (Connolly 2012; DfE 2012) is very clear that '… the threat of exclusion must never be used to influence parents to remove their child from the school', and when contemplating a decision to permanently exclude, such a decision should only be taken when there has been a serious or persistent breach of school behaviour policy or where it is believed that the education or welfare of the child and other children would be seriously harmed if they remained at school.

The Statistical First Release (SFR) (DfE 2013) gathers information from the school census data about all recorded permanent and fixed-term exclusions from state-funded primary, secondary and special schools. This data shows that since 1997/8, permanent exclusions have decreased overall, with a 'spike' in 2003/4. At that time, when fixed-term exclusions were formally recorded, there was a steady increase to 2006/7 and then a decline since (DfE 2013). However, such data should be read with caution. Government data is politicised and produced by people who operate in 'different moral arenas' (MacBeath 2006, p49). In the context of school exclusion data, the statisticians are reliant on schools recording accurately and honestly, and this is known to be problematic. The Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into School Exclusions

(Connolly 2012, p32) exposed the practice of some schools in not formally recording 'unofficial' or 'informal' exclusions and that in some instances children and their families were 'persuaded' to seek a new school to avoid the threat of permanent exclusion; this is in direct conflict with UK law and the rights of the child under the UN Convention. This also means that the rates of recorded exclusions are under-reported, and it is therefore difficult to establish whether the rates are actually going up or down. This is amplified when exclusion patterns are compared with the growth in PRU rolls. In the late 1990s, recorded exclusion rates fell by around a third but the PRU population almost doubled between 1997 and 2007 (Ogg and Kaill 2010), indicating that the problem had not improved but had merely transferred elsewhere. Between 2009 and 2012 (the research period) between 5,000 and 6,000 children were recorded nationally as being permanently excluded from state-maintained schools, and between 300,000 and 350,000 pupils were recorded as having fixed-term exclusions. This is a sizable proportion of affected young people. Daniels et al. (2003) identified 'assault' (actual or threatened) on a pupil or adult as the most common reason for exclusion. Ten years later, the SFR (2013) identified 'persistent disruptive behaviour' as the most common reason for any form of exclusion (both forms are responses to power and authority), and around three times more boys than girls were likely to be excluded. The situation for children with SEN was particularly striking: compared to pupils with no SEN, around eight times more SEN pupils with statements were likely to be permanently excluded, and the figure was six times more for fixed-term exclusion. Those with identified SEN but no statement were eleven times more likely to be permanently excluded and five times more likely to have fixed-term exclusions. Children who were eligible for free school meals (determined by the level of social welfare benefits families accessed) were four times more likely to be permanently excluded and three times more likely to receive fixed-term exclusions. The most common age for exclusion was 13-years old and 14-years old, and this age group accounted for just over half of all permanent exclusions.

According to the SFR, exclusions among ethnic groups is statistically more problematic because although some groups have high rates of exclusion the population is relatively small and around three times more Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean children are most likely to be permanently excluded. The SFR information illustrates that some children are more susceptible to exclusion than others – with the most likely being 13- or 14-year-old males of black/mixed heritage, perceived as displaying persistent

disruptive behaviours, with unsupported and unmet special educational needs and in receipt of free school meals. By contrast, Gillborn's (2008) research into racial inequality in education shows how national policy on closing the attainment gap is problematic and unrealistic and runs the risk of racial inequality being locked in to the educational system. Through what Gillborn (2008) terms 'Gap Talk', the assertion that education is making progress in banishing race inequalities in education is a deception, and if trends continue the way they are, then '… Black/White inequality of achievement is permanent' (p68).

The SFR data identifies certain characteristics and probabilities behind the exclusion of children and young people from school, but it does not explain the reasons or circumstances leading to the event, which may be personal and/or systemic. School exclusion is a sanction imposed on children by adults in an attempt to bring about compliance and is embedded in policy and culture. In this context I argue that school exclusion is a weapon of control. Through the school system, politicians have attempted to organise the nation's youth on a massive scale (Ainley and Allen 2010) and Parsons (2005) shows how connected policy choices, decision-making processes and punishment are with cultural positions:

> '… policy choices are made about how disaffected, at risk young people are to be
> provided for, and these policy choices are not contained simply within an education
> policy and practice setting. The policy responses emerge from national and local
> government decision-making. They correlate with national indicators of punitiveness
> in the criminal justice system and the scale of inequalities tolerated. Policies resonate
> with deep-seated cultural positions which are linked to the willingness to pay – for
> prevention or for punishment – and with the propensity to allocate blame either to
> individuals and families or to societal failures.' (ibid., p187)

Consequently, concerns over school exclusion and disaffection have long been topics of concern for government and educationalists (Kerr and West 2010; Munn 2010; Ogg and Kaill 2010; Solomon and Rogers 2001). Whilst economic pressure to improve the wealth of the country in global markets through the development of an active, highly skilled and trained workforce shapes national policy in education and training, school exclusion can select out potential talent, perpetuate costly benefits systems and actually

decreases social inclusion in the process. The educationalists' concerns stem from the impact of exclusion on the development of the young person in terms of their being safe, happy and healthy and on their subsequent capacity to develop into socially skilled, competent and confident adults. Both imperatives impact on the experiences and development of children.

Having noted the legal aspects of exclusion and the national data for exclusion rates, I will now turn to the impact of school exclusion on those who experience it. As identified earlier, school exclusion is a significant event in the lives of young people. It reduces their social contact with their friends, it labels them as troubled and troublesome and it affects their self-image, and they are very conscious of the negative stereotyping which can be difficult to resist. Wright et al. (2010) identified how some excluded pupils felt worthless because teachers and other pupils ignored them and that many felt they were being picked on and consequently suffered 'a loss of dignity and respect' (ibid., p41), and this was all the more distressing for children in the care system. For some young people, this was a temporary state, and the experience galvanised them into developing resilience and a stronger self in order to overcome the negative reputation of exclusion and to 'prove' themselves worthy and successful (Dent and Cameron 2003; Edwards and Fox 2005; Fuller 1984; Kraemer et al. 1997). For others, it had a lasting detrimental effect, producing social and psychological insecurities:

> 'An accumulation of the denial of suitable education, the stigmatization of being
> labelled problematic and untrustworthy and the reduced social contact with school
> friends, which result from being excluded from school combine to create the wider
> social alienation of many young people who have been excluded from school.' (Wright
> et al. 2010, p97)

The impact of school exclusion had a pernicious effect on families, too, who often felt that the punishment was unfair. Additional stresses were introduced into the family dynamics that affected the relationships in the home; sometimes this aided bonding and at other times it was divisive. Following permanent exclusion, new provision has to be secured within six days. The process of moving school under these circumstances

is difficult, and schools can refuse to admit adding to the sense of rejection and disillusionment. The local authority has to make alternative provision for the pupil, and this may involve directing them to a school or provision that is not their preferred choice, or directing a school to take the pupil, neither of which happens quickly nor is conducive to a 'fresh start'. In addition, the pupil's community might also contribute to the stigmatisation, particularly if the young person became drawn into antisocial or offending patterns of behaviour. Exclusion usually results in the young person being sent home with little to do, often without adult supervision. If the young person experiences repeated exclusions, the amount of time spent out of school can be huge, and gaps in learning reinforced by disaffection can have a devastating effect on academic success:

> 'Being in "educational limbo" not only affected the young person's immediate educational attainment, but it also affected their long-term employability status, reputation and future prospects.' (Wright et al. 2010, *p98*)

With prospects of education, employment or training reduced through exclusion, the excludees are 'at risk' of becoming further labelled as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training), another government statistic to be highlighted, targeted and reduced. Eastman's report 'No excuses' (2011) claimed the approximated cost of permanent exclusions to be £650 million and in excess of £8.8 billion for truancy; but the human costs in terms of underachievement, crime, homelessness and mental health are incalculable. It is therefore in everyone's best interests, but especially those of young people, to keep them actively included in learning. Doing that requires an understanding of why they come to be excluded, and that is as much to do with the pressures on schools to meet certain prescribed standards as it is to do with the young person and their view of the world they are in.

This next section will set out a brief history of the development of school standards and in doing so will highlight the pressure on young people to successfully deliver schools' and the government's objectives for them to improve the skills of the national workforce through a knowledge economy.

Schools and 'standards'

It is important to appreciate that concern over school standards is a recurring historical theme and that there has been a raft of policies and reforms encapsulated in numerous Acts of Parliament as successive governments have made their mark based on what they think the British public has democratically voted them into power to do and on their own agenda of being ahead in global markets. In 1997, New Labour came into power and began a series of significant and influential campaigns directed at raising education standards, safeguarding children and reducing poverty and worklessness. The Every Child Matters (ECM) (2003) agenda was significant; it changed the way organisations worked with one another, particularly in relation to sharing information on children; it paved the way for The Children's Plan (2007b) which was also aimed at improving the lives of children and young people and specified the interventions for closing the gap in educational achievements for disadvantaged children. Fuelled by media attention, behaviour in schools was a high priority. The Steer Report (2005) linked practice in the field with the ECM agenda, and a further Steer Report in 2009 set out a framework of recommendations for government, schools and LAs to work in partnership to improve behavioural standards. During this period, the 14–19 curriculum was topical, and in response to widening the curriculum in a vocational dimension, FE colleges offered new courses to 14-year-olds and independent training providers began to flourish. In this expansion, further opportunities emerged for schools to displace their problematic pupils off-site in 'alternative provision', which I will explain more fully later.

Essentially, this study is about the experiences of a particular group of young people in a PRU during the period 2009–2012. Therefore, I have not dwelt on the early history of education other than to set out a context that situated PRUs in the then current field of education. The period following World War II was a time of dramatic social change, and the development of a state education system was a key component of the social reforms. There was an expansion in schooling when the school leaving age was raised, first in 1947 to 15 years old, then in 1972 to 16 years old as labour shortages developed, producing what Furlong and Cartmel (1997) described as '…an army of reluctant conscripts to post compulsory education' (p17), and this was opposed by working-class families who wanted their children to earn (Ainley and Allen 2010; Willis 1977). The majority of the state school population came from working-class families and it was

widely accepted that '[t]he social relations of the school would replicate the social relations in the workplace, and thus help young people adapt to the social division of labour' (Bowles 1977, p139). Further, '[t]he social relations of the school: specifically, in its emphasis on discipline, punctuality, acceptance of authority outside the family, and individual accountability for one's work' (ibid., p139), thus incorporated a distinct set of values in standards that schools were expected to deliver on which also provided '[a]n ideal preparation for factory work' (ibid., p139) and a clear expectation that school was for preparing working-class children for working-class jobs, and many

> '… left school without any real qualifications and only basic education. Universal
>
> literacy, for example, was never attained (then or since) … '. (Ainley and Allen 2010,
>
> p14)

However, new social movements developed around equalities (feminism, environmentalism, civil rights, anti-racist and anti-nuclear) which influenced politics (Hall 2010; Proctor 2004), and in 1963, the entitlement to access higher education was established for all who were capable of benefitting from it, which resulted in an increase in new universities and colleges to meet the demand. Consequently, there was significant growth in education that was enforced amongst the young and seized upon by other sections of society – both young and mature. Following soon after in 1965, comprehensive education was introduced in response to growing parental pressure. The balance in the class structure was altering as the nation became more prosperous and parents were becoming increasingly concerned about the reliability of the eleven-plus system, which selected some children for grammar schools and, potentially, higher education, leaving the rest to secondary moderns, with limited opportunities on leaving and feeling a sense of alienation by the selective ethos of grammar schools. As children from secondary modern schools achieved GCE levels, an increasing consciousness about the potential wastage of ability among working-class children – particularly girls – emerged, increasing resentment about the missed opportunities among those parents of middle-class children who were compelled to attend working-class secondary moderns because they failed the eleven-plus (Crosland 1982) whilst ironically, some working-class children who attended grammar schools experienced humiliation from staff and children because of their comparatively humble origins (Jackson and Marsden 1962).

Comprehensive schools were introduced to provide a non-selective educational opportunity for all children in their local neighbourhood. It did not mean the end of grammar schools, as they have endured. Comprehensive curriculums veered towards being ' … "student centred" rather than academically subject-centred' (Ainley and Allen 2010, p18), and consequently comprehensive schools were heavily criticised for becoming less demanding of children's academic abilities; '… most young people left school for "jobs without education" (ibid., p20), and by the 1980s, '… the majority of school leavers ended up on a succession of Youth Training Schemes (YTS)' *(*ibid*., p23). Youth training was a means of managing and disguising youth unemployment and left many young people cynical about the government and resistant to initiatives and interventions to get them into work or training.

Politicians and the teaching profession 'locked horns', and bitter disputes resulted as the government challenged the professionalism of teachers (Whitty 2006). The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) emerged as a consequence and introduced a standardised national curriculum with 'key stage' expectations and an assessment framework that measured individual performances of children and their schools. The watchword was 'accountability'; parents received more information about what was expected of schools and how schools shaped up to those expectations (league tables) through the academic performance of the children in them. An unexpected consequence of the new arrangements was the switch in focus from 'girls' underachievement' to that of boys, as

> '… the National Curriculum had the unforeseen effect of boosting their [girls] exam
> performance in all the subjects that were now compulsory. They embraced "the
> career code" as new possibilities opened up for them in the service sector using new
> technology. Only a minority of girls, including persisting groups of young mothers,
> were left behind … '. (Ainley and Allen 2010, p26)

Computerisation enabled more data to be generated and interrogated more quickly and subsequently publicised, creating league tables of school performance. As much as schools say they hate this public accountability, they also rely on it to position themselves against other schools as they compete for pupils

in a market economy. Academic performance became increasingly important to the long-term security of schools but, as the drive to improve school standards escalated, it was matched with an escalation in exclusions and a disaffection with learning which was compounded by another significant and relevant development of the 1980s – the 1981 Education Act, which focused on children with special educational needs (SEN). The underpinning idea was that education should include all children in a common educational framework (Warnock 1978) and that many children with SEN were capable of accessing a mainstream education and should do so. The Education and Skills Committee (2006) highlighted that there was 'no single, clearly identifiable category of children with SEN', and that whilst SEN existed across 'the whole spectrum of social class and abilities' there was 'a strong correlation between social deprivation and SEN'. Importantly, the report identified that '[t]here is a category of children in the current system now described as having social, emotional or behavioural difficulties (SEBD). This, along with autism, is the fastest growing category of SEN' (p18). The DES Circular 23/89 defined this 'fastest growing category' as

'Children who set up barriers between themselves and their learning environment through inappropriate, aggressive, bizarre or withdrawn behaviour' and who '… have developed a range of strategies for dealing with day-to-day experiences that are inappropriate and impede normal personal and social development, and make it difficult for them to learn.' (cited by Cooper et al. 1994, p20)

Not only had schools expanded because national policy dictated that children should stay in compulsory education for longer, but more children with special educational needs, particularly with SEBD and autism who often presented challenging behaviours, were also part of the mainstream. Local authorities were required to assess children with special educational needs and determine whether they needed additional support to maintain them in mainstream schools or whether they needed to direct them to a special school. To access additional support or special school provision, children had to meet the requirements for an SEN Statement, as set out in the Code of Practice, which was first established in 1994 and was revised in 2001, 2013 and 2014 (DfE website: www.gov.uk). Because there is a threshold for interventions, there are children in schools who do not quite qualify for additional support but who still have unmet needs. Their responses to their particular circumstances are often reflected in their behaviour and exclusion levels.

Since the 1990s, the ability to benchmark pupil and school performance coupled with the changing nature of the school population and an increase in exclusions, has continued to cause concern that schools were not doing enough well enough and resulted in a relentless focus on teaching and leadership through the school improvement agenda because

'Improving schools in general can therefore be seen as a way of helping all students –
and disadvantaged students in particular – to achieve better results and thus improve
their life chances.' (Kerr and West 2010, p19)

Further, the performance of UK children was being compared with that of children in other countries, and a European league table added additional pressure to a workforce already under strain. Children became subjected to an unprecedented level of testing and categorisation (Ainley and Allen 2010), which identified 'vulnerable' groups using free school meals information (family poverty, unemployment or under-employment), poor basic skills, gender differences, ethnicity, pregnancy and teenage mothers and non-attenders/truancy. Up to 1992, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) and local authority advisory services inspected schools and reported directly to the Secretary of State following a school inspection. This was not enough to allay growing concerns over the quality and consistency of inspections. In 1992, HMI was reorganised to form a non-ministerial government body known as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), which had the specific remit of scrutinising schools regularly by a 'rigorous and transparent process' (Elliott 2012, p1). In order to do this, an inspection framework and supporting handbook with specified evaluation criteria were developed. Reporting followed the same main headings as in the handbook, which included standards of achievement (progress) and quality of learning, and pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance. In 2009 (the period of the study), a new framework was introduced which

' … was intended to ensure that inspectors would spend a higher proportion of their
on-site inspection time in the classroom, place greater emphasis on the performance

of particular groups of pupils, especially the most vulnerable, and take more account

of the views of parents and pupils. Following the heightened concern about child

protection, safeguarding was given a high priority.' (Elliott 2012, p2)

In terms of Ofsted's effectiveness, there are differing opinions, as one would expect. Ofsted boasts of its perceived successes in driving school improvement, although Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) Bell stated that he had always been cautious about claiming that inspection caused improvement and that such an assertion was 'fundamentally unprovable' (MacBeath 2006, p30).   Bell also believed that inspection *contributed* to school improvement by providing 'good clues' to those responsible for bringing about improvement.   However, subsequent HMCIs Gilbert (2010), Rosen (2011) and Wilshaw (2012) positioned inspection firmly in the school improvement arena, whilst also placing emphasis on accountability and process in a climate of spending cuts and entitlement to high-quality educational provision.   Their annual reports are influential, but Ferguson et al*.* (2000), whilst warning of bias, stated, 'OfSTED is unlikely to work against its own self interest' (p133).   Elliot (2012) also commented:

'It is difficult to determine Ofsted's role in securing school improvement as there is so

little agreement as to whether schools have improved at all in the past 20 years and, if

they have, by how much.' (ibid., p4)

In pursuing 'good' Ofsted outcomes, some schools resorted to illegally excluding their most troublesome pupils during inspections, thus masking the need for additional support and obfuscating failures of the senior management team and governing bodies (Ainley and Allen 2010; Poole: preface in Eastman 2011). Nonetheless, it is the current Ofsted framework and evaluations that determine whether a school is performing well or not, and throughout the ten inspection frameworks over the past twenty years, achievement, attainment and progress, exclusions, behaviour and attendance have featured consistently, thus forming the basis of expected standards; because these are key features I will now explain their significance in terms of children outside mainstream school.

Attainment, achievement and progress

Much use is made of these three terms, but through common overuse, meaning may be cloudy. For clarity, I turned to the DfE (2014), which provided partial definitions. 'Attainment' was referred to in terms of targets and levels descriptors: 'knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of each key stage'. 'Achievement' was defined as 'Achievement and performance in the broadest sense, including the achievement of individuals and institutions, throughout education and career development.' And the nearest descriptor to progress was in relation to 'Progress in International Reading Literacy Study' that stated that in this study progress measured trends in achievement. Pupil progression is defined as: 'The progress children make in school, year by year as well as between key stages.'

It is a core belief of government that through effective teaching and active participation in learning, children can progress and attain a high level of achievement (DfE 2012a; DfE 2013a; Steer 2009). However, children do not learn at a regulated rate and there are many barriers to learning, both inside and outside schools, that have to be overcome if children are to be successful in schools and in learning. 'Success' is determined by academic performance in relation to 'standardised assessment tests' (SATs) at the end of each Key Stage (KS) or by teacher assessments against key stage criteria. National expectations at the time of the study were for children to progress or advance by two national curriculum levels between KS1 and KS2 and three national curriculum levels between KS2 and KS4. It was this information that profiled schools in national league tables and informed RAISEonline and Fischer Family Trust databases, which were used extensively in target-setting by schools and local authorities as part of the school improvement movement. Attainment data has other uses, as Kerr and West (2010) illustrate,

> 'In education, the relationship between schools and social inequality is often explored
> by looking at the test and examination scores achieved by different groups of children
> and young people, and other monitoring data. This can reveal long-standing patterns
> of unequal outcomes. For example, as a group, children from poorer backgrounds are
> less successful than their more advantaged peers in tests across a range of subjects.

This is a widespread international phenomenon, with social disadvantage having a negative impact on attainment in all 30 developed countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).' (p10)

This would suggest that school attainment data is a barometer for social inequality, but it does not explain the differences in performance of some groups compared to others – or what will help. It often seems that issues of equality and diversity in schools are at odds with each other as 'strategies that secure more "equal" outcomes for children may sometimes do so at the expense of diversity' (ibid., p16).

Earlier, I drew attention to the number of inspection frameworks over the last twenty years. The changes represent a shift in focus for the inspectorate as it responded to changes in public interest and the curriculum (Ferguson et al. 2000). HMCIs Gilbert (2010) and Wilshaw (2012) referred to changes as 'raising the bar' as the education system improved to further challenge complacency and encourage improvement. When my research began, the inspection focus was on 'attainment', and this was problematic for some children with learning gaps or delayed development and schools with 'turbulent' intakes. The inspection framework was amended during the research period and the focus shifted to 'progress over time'. This was much more helpful to schools with a roll that was frequently changing as pupils moved in and out and also to PRUs whose intake was also fluid – provided there was benchmark data on entry with which to compare. Whilst some defended the changes in terms of school improvement, I am inclined to think that the changes were also in part evolutionary and developed as teachers and inspectors really got to understand the relationship between attainment, achievement and progression in the context of measurable outcomes.

Behaviour

'Defining poor behaviour is not straightforward and there are many alternative definitions' (DfE 2012b, p4), and the context, frequency and seriousness of disruptive behaviour is problematic. Cameron (1998) identified five categories of problematic behaviour: being verbally and physically aggressive towards others;

physically damaging the environment; being socially disruptive; challenging authority; and being self-disruptive. Overtly displayed, each category produces behaviour that stops learning and, with the exception of the last category, can threaten the safety of others, but it is the persistent, subversive, low-level disruption that creates the most problems for teaching and learning (Watkins and Wagner 2000). Not all children cope with such an intense focus on learning:

> 'The high value attached to academic ability combined with the current, regular, high-stakes ability testing programmes in schools is a potent recipe for fostering fears of academic failure. These fears may then prompt a range of defensive strategies that act to protect the student's self-worth by providing "explanations" for academic "failure" that deflect attention away from a lack of academic ability onto other less damaging reasons.' (Jackson 2006, p141)

Some children react to it in different, defensive ways, such as complete avoidance (non-attendance), withdrawing (passive resistance) or 'acting out' (active resistance). In each instance, their learning and sometimes that of others is disrupted and performance becomes 'at risk' of stalling or regressing. Their behaviour becomes difficult to manage in mainstream schools and they are then 'at risk' of underperforming, underachieving and school exclusion. Consequently, there is a considerable amount of pressure on schools to tackle these issues. Sometimes they get it wrong and sometimes the pupils place themselves in untenable situations and end up excluded, sometimes permanently.

Concern escalated about pupil behaviour that impeded learning for them and others and threatened the safety of them and others, and containing these pupils often took valuable resources away from other pupils which, according to Lloyd-Smith (1984), threatened to handicap schools from progressing economic development too. The pupils' lack of achievement and the disruption caused to others impacted on the performance of the school, which could potentially affect funding levels as intakes haemorrhaged to other 'better' schools. Teacher unions were also taking issue with the government as pupils were increasingly subjecting their members to physical and verbal attacks and accusations of assault (TES 19.11.10). This evidence makes recruitment and retention of good teachers difficult to maintain, and the disruption caused

by not having permanent good teachers in a school is as catastrophic in terms of teaching and learning and school performance as the pupils who disrupt learning. Schools with these problems are often situated in deprived areas and therefore class issues (which will be covered in more detail in Chapter 2) are significant. Social class, according to Perry and Francis (2010)

'… remains the strongest predictor of educational achievement in the UK, where the social class gap for educational achievement is one of the most significant in the developed world.' (p2)

As reform advanced, and to countermand the effects of deprivation and educational underachievement, New Labour (1997–2010) attempted to drive up standards '… through the diversification of the market and increased competition' (ibid.) and legislation. In some instances, the very policies designed to reduce ambiguities and control the work of educationalists often produce unintended consequences, and 'the response has been to develop corrective policies – which have themselves generated further unintended consequences' (Hoyle and Wallace 2005, pvii). There have been numerous initiatives directed at remediating the effects of deprivation on educational underachievement, such as Excellence in Cities; Education Action Zones; Aimhigher; Narrowing the Gap; and Pupil Premium Grant, each drawing attention to the deficits of society and therefore identifying and selecting individuals, groups and communities for intervention, but not necessarily talking to those most affected to see if they wanted this type of exposure. Indeed, the stigma of receiving support/benefit for some is counterproductive. The pressures identified by Archer et al. (2010) that marginalised people (Fig. 1) seemed to me to work well in terms of the school dynamic, as illustrated next (Fig. 2).
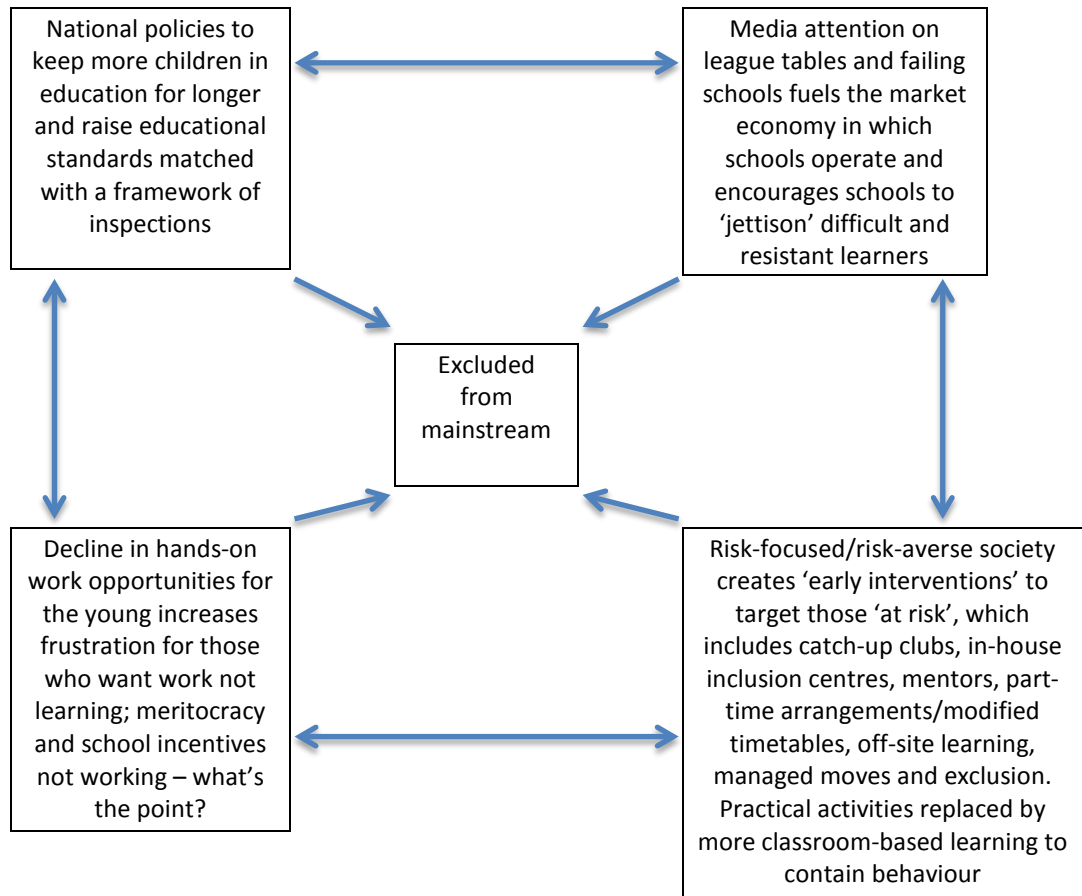
Fig. 2   How children become marginalised in schools based on a further interpretation of Fig. 1 by the

researcher

The additional government funding intended to tackle underachievement and disaffection produced

benefits such as enabling increased numbers of specialist staff to target learning difficulties, introduced

Learning Mentors, increased the numbers of attendance officers, developed resources and enhanced

premises.   Under the auspices of the National Behaviour and Attendance Strategy, the Behaviour

Improvement Programme (also part of the behaviour and attendance strand of the Excellence in Cities

initiative) was launched, with an annual budget of £1 million to promote good behaviour in schools and the

community and to improve attendance levels in schools. Some schools used this funding to 'pump-prime'

in-house inclusion units, which resulted in excluding some children from their mainstream lessons. For

many pupils, this withdrawal provided a safe, supportive and conducive learning environment where they

could catch up without being exposed in the mainstream classroom; for others it became a restriction on

their social activities and fuelled a resistant, disruptive attitude, thus creating further conflict. In an attempt to minimise the disruption of disaffected learners, schools adopted a range of strategies around rewards and sanctions, building inherent pride (belonging) in the school and its community and also modifying the curriculum (Rutter et al. 1979). This could take several forms: targeted learning support in or out of the main classroom, adapting the curriculum and differentiating learning, but also modified timetables, flexi-learning, extended study leave and alternative provision.

Modified timetables, flexi-schooling and extended study leave generally meant a combination of provision between school, home and other providers. Under these arrangements, pupils stayed on the school roll and registers were marked in accordance with the statutory guidance. This part-time strategy was intended as a short-term intervention in which the school retained responsibility for the pupil and was expected to review the arrangements regularly (every six weeks) and to set and mark appropriate levels of work during the period. As with fixed-term exclusion, it was open to abuse when work was not set or marked or if the review did not take place either because the school did not arrange the meeting or families did not turn up. In some instances, this practice resulted in children being unsupervised during the day and was therefore a potential safeguarding issue.

Attendance

The focus on behaviour also included attendance, truancy and bullying (which is the most common reason cited by children for refusing to attend school (Malcolm et al. 2003). When children decided not to go to school, sometimes parents condoned this but this was not always the case. There are three main concerns about children not attending school: firstly, if children are not attending school they are not getting the prescribed education; secondly, their attitude devalues the importance of learning and may infect others if not stopped; and finally, as with exclusions, the children's safety, as parents and agencies may not know of their whereabouts and who they may be coming into contact with. Therefore, the impact and the risk of children self-excluding are significant in many ways and there are statutory responsibilities for both parents and schools to take note of. Interestingly, whilst parents are subjected to prosecution proceedings for their

child or children's lack of attendance, schools are not – particularly regarding illegal exclusions – either because there is a general lack of understanding in schools and families about what the law says and what is acceptable or because no one is actively looking for illegal exclusions, with perhaps a part-exception for Ofsted, and 'there is no meaningful sanction to prevent schools from doing this' (Atkinson 2013a, p5). Faced with a possible prosecution for non-attendance or exclusion, some parents resort to educating at home (Malik, 2013) and then find themselves back in the system when that breaks down. This can be a cycle of deflection, as there are no limits on how many times parents can elect to home educate and how many times the arrangements can be judged inappropriate or inadequate. In addition, parents may not have the skills and knowledge to educate effectively at home – the arrangements may have to break down before that becomes apparent.

Ogg and Kaill (2010) argued that political pressure to reduce exclusion actively created it in another form – 'effective exclusion' – and an unintended consequence was a rise in the use of managed moves and off-site placements, spawning a new school industry of alternative provision in which children had '… virtually no legal rights to affect the education they receive after an exclusion …' (ibid., p3), which, it should be noted, contravenes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. When schools have seemingly exhausted all their available strategies to engage the disengaged, there is another form of provision that is used, which is essentially off-site – alternative provision.

Alternative provision (AP)

In this section I will explain the legal status of PRUs, how they evolved and how they are used.

Section 19(1) of the 1996 Education Act stipulates that local authorities have a statutory duty to make suitable

> '…education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory
>
> school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for
>
> any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.'

and that any school established and maintained by the local authority (that is not mainstream or special) would be known as a 'pupil referral unit' (PRU). In essence, alternative provision is for children without a school place whose education is publicly funded. However, there was no requirement for LAs to have PRUs, and they could make the necessary provision for children out of school using tutors for small groups of four or less. Unlike schools, PRUs (at the time of this study) remained under the direct control of the local authority. There were almost 400 active PRUs in the UK at the time of the research, making them a very small, specialist sector of school provision. Because they were established to cater for the particular needs of different authorities, they varied considerably in the way they were structured and managed. Common to all, though, was the principle that pupils did not have to study the national curriculum, which was disapplied, but they had to receive a broad and balanced curriculum which was appropriate and relevant to their needs.

Prior to formalising PRUs, local authorities had already been making educational provision for children unable to access mainstream education either because of enduring physical and/or mental health issues, or teenage pregnancy, or exclusion. This work was funded and organised through the LA's Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) and home/hospital tuition services. However, the increasing political pressure to reduce school exclusions, drive up standards and increase participation and inclusion through increased effectiveness and efficiency measures caused the government to require local authorities to gather information about children not in school under the auspices of accountability – and act on it. As more and more children were referred for behavioural reasons, LAs had to register some of their units as PRUs because of the volume, and financial pressure demanded higher pupil–teacher ratios within the existing provision. PRUs become more and more a repository for 'dumping' unwanted children (Eastman 2011; Ogg and Kaill 2010), particularly those with SEN. Teachers from the home and medical services found themselves dealing with very different issues that they were untrained for, but they developed expertise through hard experience. Services were generally underfunded and accommodation and resources were poor. Consequently, poor outcomes resulted that, along with the notoriety of bad behaviour, contributed to PRUs having a poor reputation per se (Ogg and Kaill 2010).

By 2008, approximately one third of all alternative provision placements were in pupil referral units, with the rest distributed amongst private and volunteer organisations and further education colleges (DCFS, 2008). There was limited performance data available at this time for alternative provision, but what was available indicated significant underachievement and wasted potential. This prompted two noteworthy developments – inspection and strategy. New Labour produced a strategy Back on Track (2008) for modernising alternative provision, and Ofsted began inspecting PRUs, thus highlighting issues in PRUs, i.e. under-resourcing and underperformance as well as teaching and learning, and behaviour and attendance.

In 2011, the Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove asked Charlie Taylor (the government's then 'expert' adviser on behaviour in schools) to undertake a review of all alternative provision, and the results, with recommendations, were published in the Taylor Report (2012). Earlier, I established that the most likely children to be excluded from school were 13- to 14-year-old males of black or mixed heritage, with some form of unmet learning needs and challenging behaviours and some degree of economic deprivation based on the SFR data (2013). The Taylor Report (2012) showed a slightly different age range for those in AP in that the majority of children and young people placed there were predominantly in Years 10 and 11 and were there to change their behaviour. This is not surprising, because of the KS4 focus on vocational education and off-site providers specialising in placements for the older student around the theme of preparation for work. Taylor (2012) also went on to say that many children originated from the most deprived backgrounds, often coming

> '…from chaotic homes in which problems such as drinking, drug-taking, mental health
> issues, domestic violence and family breakdown are common. These children are often
> stuck in complex patterns of negative, self-destructive behaviour and helping them is
> not easy or formulaic. Many also have developed mental health issues.' (Taylor 2012,
> p4)

He added,

'Children in PRUs and AP are twice as likely as the average pupil to qualify for free school meals. They are more likely to have had poor attendance in school and to be known to social services and to the police. As set out in the DfE's Statistical First Release for children with special educational needs (SEN), in January 2011, 79 percent of pupils in PRUs have SEN, and often the boundaries between AP and SEN provision are blurred. Two-thirds of pupils in AP and PRUs are boys.' (ibid., p5)

Their coping skills, according to Taylor (2012), were often poor, and in addition,

'*Back on Track* (2008) reported that just under half of the pupils in PRUs were there because they had been excluded and over half of children go to their first AP placement via a PRU.' (ibid*.,* p19)

It is wise to remember that the SFR and Taylor are government agents and are therefore politically charged and potentially biased, as Gillborn (2008) identified earlier through his notion of 'Gap Talk'; although Gillborn's notion addressed racism as being 'locked-in' to the education system, Taylor's interpretation has similar connotations for deprivation and stigmatisation. However, much as excluded pupils are portrayed as problematic, some can be extremely resilient and '… have been shown to continue to exhibit high levels of optimism in terms of finding work and achieving career aspirations …' (Wright et al. 2010, p47). They are capable individuals when appropriately motivated and supported. Whilst this research reflects some of the statistical trends indicated, it also demonstrates that young people from *disadvantaged* backgrounds are worthy and often sensitive young people, features that the Taylor Report and statistical evidence often gloss over in their efforts to marginalise those who dare to be different and resist convention.

The exclusion data presented by SFR (DfE 2013) was used by other researchers in the field of PRUs. Cole et al. (1998; 2003) drew attention to the high impact of multiple deprivation factors and family disruption on PRU students; Daniels et al. (2003) found that excluded students were often offenders, and around half of

their research sample had experience of drugs use, but it was difficult to establish to what extent, and how many excludees, had experienced behavioural difficulties in school from a very early age. Cole et al. (1998, 1999) and Daniels et al. (2003) showed that the disproportion of boys to girls in PRUs created issues around grouping students for learning and gender role-modelling. Jackson (2006) argues that fear of failure is a common feature among school students and is often '… fuelled by dominant and powerful standards and credential discourses' (ibid., p140) and contributes to encouraging ' … defensive "laddish" attitudes among boys and girls' (ibid., p142), which may also be influenced by 'social goals because "laddish" ways of performing masculinity or femininity are generally regarded as "cool" and earn pupils "popularity points" among peers' (ibid., p141) as they try to make sense of the social relationships within schools. Wright et al.'s (2010) research identified complex factors and particular circumstances that increased the risk of exclusion which '[a]s well as being racialised, their [student] experiences at school were viewed as a gendered or class-biased process' (ibid., p36). Wright et al. (2010) also referred to the relationship between school exclusion and offending and the brutal cycle of challenging behaviour and rejection, reinforced by damaging stigma-labelling such as 'excludee', 'troublesome' and 'difficult' (p45), which is compounded by the effects of social class, communities, local environments and students' perceptions of themselves and their own identity. These are recurring themes throughout the literature.

Alternative provision does not come cheaply, and placements may be full or part-time. The Taylor Report (2012) stated that there could be a considerable variation in the cost for a full-time PRU placement compared to that of an AP placement, with the PRU place costing in the region of £12,000–£18,000 per year and AP costing £9,500 per year. The report provided anecdotal evidence that some schools or LAs '… were at times drawn to cheap provision, with price, not quality, being the main commissioning driver' (Taylor 2012, p15). Ofsted (2011) highlighted another issue around the quality of provision in non-PRU AP in that they were largely unregulated; there were no requirements for these organisations to register with any official body, and also they may not have had any form of external assessment at all. Consequently, some providers organised themselves to deliberately 'fly beneath the radar' of Ofsted and the local authority, by operating with smaller groups and part-time placements. This practice was not confined to private companies; local authorities adopted it too.

The attempts to narrow the gaps in learning and reduce social inequality have been extensive. The BERA Report (Kerr and West 2010) examined these initiatives and interventions in detail and concluded that whilst schools can make a difference, '20 years of competition between schools has had little impact on disadvantaged students' (p45). Where the gap has narrowed, this has been down to the progress in individual schools. Further, the impact of policies on children's progress has been variable, uneven and intermittent. Overall,

> 'The UK education system has a poor record when it comes to helping children from deprived backgrounds keep pace with their more advantaged peers. Schooling outcomes appear to reflect, indeed magnify, existing social differences.' (Kerr and West 2010, p51)

Conclusion

Starting with the rights enshrined in policy of the child for a safe, happy and healthy transition into adulthood, I set out in this chapter to explore the discourse surrounding exclusion and the impact of exclusion on children and young people and the means by which policy and schools manage 'disruptive' behaviour that culminates in off-site learning placements. 'Standards' and 'continual improvement' are contested areas, for different reasons, that generate pressure and stress and reduce tolerance. Paradoxically and ironically, the policies and interventions designed to reduce inequality have also served to highlight differences, and in doing so they perpetuate inequality, and one is left wondering in whose interests the policies and interventions are for, and why so many young people continue to be daring and challenging. Many children and young people have certainly benefited, but many have also become more exposed because of their lack of resources, and social class was identified as the strongest predictor of educational achievement or a lack of it.

Throughout this chapter, I have concentrated on the context in which PRUs have emerged and operate. I

have touched on issues of identity, class, culture and resistance and, because they are important theoretical

concepts in this research, I will explore them in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: A conceptual and theoretical framework

In the preceding chapter, references were made to the unequal distribution of wealth that produced poverty and deprivation, how systems and individuals used authority and power to tackle inequalities but inadvertently caused resistance and exclusion, and the impact of exclusion on the identity and positioning of young people and their schools in their communities and networks.   Running consistently through these discourses are concomitant concepts of social class, culture and identity and the power relations that strive to keep the status quo within populations that are continually refreshing themselves and building on what has gone before.

The second research question asks, 'What critical external and environmental factors impact on achievement, attainment and behaviour?', and in conceptualising the PRU as a social field, I explore in this chapter the conceptual and theoretical aspects of 'class', 'culture' and 'capital' using Bourdieu as the initial but not the exclusive inspiration. The concepts of 'class and 'culture' have multiple facets and are inextricably linked, making a clinical separation difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Therefore, the focus of each concept does not exclude the place of the other in understanding and explaining meaning. I start this section with an explanation of the different classes and the tensions between them before highlighting the issues that class has on educational attainment. I explain culture as a means of identity and control through an exploration of Bourdieu's ideas about 'field', 'capital' and 'habitus' before turning to the particular issues of youth, including the impact of their multiple cultures on educational attainment.

Classifying class

In the late 1800s, Marx argued that there were two main classes: those who owned land and those who worked it.   Following the Industrial Revolution, these two main groups became those who own the means of production (middle class) and those who live by selling their labour to the owners (working class).   The British class system was predominantly classified and recorded around occupational divisions and economic capital (ONS 2010). Fig. 3 presents an iconic cultural image depicting class in British comedy whereby: 'A

builder was working-class, a teacher middle-class and the upper class waited for their inheritance' (BBC on-line NEWS Magazine, 2013):

Source: http://www.bbc.co.uk/labuk/articles/class/

Fig. 3   British comedy explains 'class'.

Work has different values that are dependent on the skills and knowledge required to undertake the work, and that brings discriminatory differentials in status. Put simply, professional occupations generated more income than physical labourers and this created opportunities for significantly different lifestyles. As the national wealth expanded, contracted and changed, the distinctions between the middle and working classes blurred as class positions moved up and down (Giddens 2008). In the 1950s, people from traditionally working-class backgrounds were able to generate substantial incomes and had increased purchasing power (Proctor 2004). Some professionals and academics classed themselves as working class, which emerged as a new 'working-middle' class (Ainley and Allen 2010) who were leading 'double lives' of the upwardly mobile, not fully knowing who they were (Ryan and Sackrey, 1994).   Class classification is a contentious subject because of the moral value attached to each class, and it is difficult to define class clearly, but it seems to be intuitively understood, and this is quite possibly because of its relationship to other concepts, which Skeggs (2004) explains thus,

'The strange thing about excavating the history of the concept of class is how it has a

remarkably long and dense relationship to other concepts. First, class is always closely

entwined with different forms of exchange as an idea in its various manifestations (e.g.

markets and capitalism as the contemporary variant). Second, it is always and intimately connected to the concept of the self. Third, it can only be known through other categorizations. Fourth, it always embeds the interests of the theorist in the perspective taken on it, and fifth it always has a moral value and is connected to systems of moral evaluation just as much as it is to systems of economic exchange.' (p27)

In this way, Skeggs conceptualises class as '… simultaneously collective, conflictual, cultural and individualised' (Reay 2011, p2) and Skeggs (1997) further argues that class can be defined without resorting to particular individuals.

The preoccupation with allocating people to social classes has produced various schemes over time, often in response to changing census information (Rose 1995). The standard government classification (National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification – NS-SeC) is based on occupation status because not only are the classifications based on readily available routine data, but also because '… it remains the case that a person's employment situation is a key determinant of life chances' (Rose 1995, p4). Dissatisfaction with this deductive approach resulted in the development of other tools such as the Goldthorpe class schema, which differentiated between employers, employees and the self-employed, and the Cambridge Scale, whereby lifestyle, social stratification and social inequality featured in the categorisation. In 2013, the results of a two-year study (The Great British Survey) were published. Professor Mike Savage led a team of sociologists in this project, which was designed to develop a more accurate understanding of the British class system and resulted in a new hierarchical model of seven identifiable groups (Fig. 4) that gave more structure to the new working-middle class:

'**Elite**: Most privileged group, set apart from other classes because of wealth. Highest scoring economically, socially and culturally

Established middle class: Largest class group and second wealthiest. Also score high culturally and socially

Technical middle class: Small distinct group that aren't so social but have money and are into emerging culture such as gaming, the internet and rock music

New affluent workers: A young group, socially and culturally active with middling levels of income

Traditional working class: Score low economically, socially and culturally but have reasonably high house values and oldest average age

Emergent service workers: New young urban group who don't have much money but are very social and cultural. They "live for today"

Precariat: Poorest, most deprived class who score low economically, socially and culturally.'

Source: **Great British Class Survey**

Fig. 4   Britain's new social classes – The BBC's Great British Survey 2013

This model was based on the influential research of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who argued that modern societies could not be explained in wholly economic terms.   Bourdieu expanded the earlier Marxist view of capital as a monetary exchange or economic capital to include 'social', 'cultural' and 'symbolic capitals', to which Quinn (2010) also adds 'imagined capital', which she describes as '… the benefit that is created by participating in imagined or symbolic networks' (p68).

Bourdieu's concept of capitals describe four powerful power dimensions through which social energy is channelled in order to distinguish and position social relations, which enable people to move within distinct social fields (Bourdieu 1986; Skeggs 2004).   *Economic* capital consists of what a person owns such as material goods and property, income, inherited wealth and assets.   *Cultural* capital consists of education and qualifications, exposure to and appreciation of the arts and leisure pursuits, and consumerism which influences and is influenced by life-style choices.   *Social* capital refers to the resources that derive from networks of friends and contacts (individuals or groups) that are used to gain favour or advancement. *Symbolic* capital emerges when the other forms of capital become legitemised or recognised, which then creates *status* that may be of a personal or professional nature and is highly prized.   According to Bourdieu (1984), social classes can be distinguished by the type and amount of capital they have or have had, and the

emergent differences contribute to shaping lifestyles, habits, skills and dispositions that he described as 'habitus'. Bourdieu (1984) also regarded habitus as the physical embodiment of cultural capital, deeply ingrained and reproduced unconsciously, colouring our perceptions about past, present and future practice and structures and generating a 'feel' for social situations enabling relatively safe navigation through complex social environments.

In Bourdieu's interpretation of capital, each required value and was the product of an 'exchange'. This was straightforward when monetary value was involved and more complex when 'value' was an intangible commodity, as in the other forms of capital. What was unique in Bourdieu's argument was the incorporation of the concepts of 'social capital' and 'cultural capital', or the notion that what people know and do is as significant to class and personal prospects as economic capital (income). Critics of the Savage approach question whether or not the model maps social status more than measuring social class (Scott 2013), disputes definitions, boundaries, thresholds and the permanency of classification membership (Payne 2013) and the extent to which class is formed through the influences of consumerism, age, gender and income (Bennett et al. 2009). For all its flaws, I would argue that as a contemporary study this survey illustrates how much more fluid the middle classes have become, as the five inner groups show, and how closely entwined *class* is with issues of *culture*. The 'precariat' or 'precarious proletariat' represents the bottom 15% of society, the working poor and the workless; consequently it is the most vulnerable group to experience exclusion from all forms of capital and the reason for this is its *lack* of capital. However, the Savage model is a contemporary alternative model and not a national standard.

Dillabough and Kennelly (2010) conducted a study involving the perspectives of urban youth around making and creating citizenship. The study showed how social class is a human construct, engineered by adults in a competitive field, which creates a social hierarchy based on issues relating to identity, power and status – which inevitably produced conflict.

> 'The classification struggle represents the manner in which individuals may engage in
>
> unconscious, culturally based struggles for social positions, both within and against

people of their own class, but always in explicit relation to those with whom they

imagine they are in competition.' (Dillabough and Kennelly 2010, p185)

Eager to distance themselves from the lower end of the spectrum, the middle classes marginalise the traditional working class, or, in the new parlance, 'precariat'. The policymakers are by definition middle class, and marginalisation of certain sectors of society serves to enhance the hierarchical distinction between classes by denigrating the less well-off, but they cannot be seen to be perpetuating inequalities deliberately. Policymakers, according to BBC Lab UK (2013), tend to focus on economics such as increasing taxes for the wealthy, which is relatively tangible and quantifiable. Social inequalities are more problematic, but through the introduction of initiatives that, for example, improve networking for the socially excluded, some attention is being given to developing social capital among the poorer elements of society. It is how class is viewed and used that is socially divisive, and in the context of this study the impact of social class on educational attainment and the attitudes of young people who become socially and educationally excluded is important.

Class tensions and class identity

Certain characteristics distinguish and identify particular groups of people and are used to position the group in relation to others. Because that distinction or positioning is competitive, it causes tensions. The tension between the working and middle classes has been the subject of extensive research (Bourdieu 1984; Giddens 2008; Mendez 2008; Skeggs 2004). Each classification has established a unique identity from the other in an attempt to set its own identity as the norm (Mendez 2008). As much as each class protects, projects and reinforces its own sense of normalness from within, they each do the same for each other in order to protect the distinction and keep each other in their own place. They need each other in order to be distinct. This urge to be 'normal' to belong but yet be distinct is a feature that is particularly relevant to the students excluded from school. Skeggs' (2004) discourse on the distinctions between the classes showed how tensions surfaced and shaped individuals,

'These definitions and valuation of classes also produced particular versions of the self. For the middle-class it was the "rational", constrained moral individual with reflexivity. For the working class the self was not a subject-position to be occupied, rather they were *subject* to primitive impulse. The working class were represented as having a deficit "culture"... rather than selves. Moreover, their culture was subject to numerous reform initiatives, another powerful legacy carried through into the contemporary. This was reliant on the knowledge and "expertise" of bourgeois reformers.' (Skeggs 2004, p 39)

In this passage, Skeggs makes the link with culture but also highlights the distinction in power and control in that it is the ruling middle class that determines policy and reform according to its own model of normalness, and it is therefore both controlling and powerful. However, history is littered with rebellions from the working classes such as in the steel, shipbuilding and mining industries of the Northeast (Nayak 2003) and the west Dorset farming industries, which produced the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Willis (1977) argued that this rebellious spirit of the working classes perpetuated the status quo and '... most effectively prepared some working class lads for manual work of which '... there is an element of self-damnation in the taking on of subordinate roles in Western capitalism.' (Willis 1977, p3). Willis argued that the working-class culture (including its rebellious elements) prepared children for the world of working-class work and that this was reinforced by expectations and attitudes in families, the community or neighbourhood, the workplace and schools. Interestingly, Mendez (2008) discovered that people talked about their class identities in complex ways, and that some were appreciative of the power of classification but were disinterested in it, whilst others saw class identity as significant to their own identity, particularly those from lower-middle-class backgrounds but not the 'poor'. Belonging, it would seem, is a stronger emotion in some people than in others. Quinn (2010) says belonging is perceived as socially desirable, a fluid state, an attachment and '... an endless process' (p1). When it is severed, as with exclusion, which tends to be confined to the already vulnerable, the learner feels alienated – '... I felt like I was unwanted sort of thing ... like I was a reject of the school' (Wright et al. 2010, p41) – and not much like learning or cooperating. This response may provoke the desire for change or movement (Quinn 2010) in some victims (or their

perpetrators on their behalf) as they seek a belonging elsewhere, in other places with other people: the 'fresh start'. This is often the palliative of school exclusion.

Class and educational attainment

Perry and Francis (2010, p5) states that the educational attainment of children is 'overwhelmingly linked to parental occupation, income and qualifications'; consequently, children do not have control over their economic and social status until they become financially independent. By that time, attitudes and values have been well established and they may well have already experienced social and educational exclusion in addition to reduced other capitals. The relationship between deprivation, social class and educational attainment is significant, and despite extensive national investment, Perry and Francis (2010) argue that the effort to close the gap in educational achievement has not been particularly successful. They attribute this to four key trends:

* 'A "meritocratic" approach that targets high-achieving working-class young people

* A focus on "raising" aspirations of individuals and their families

* A focus on academic routes, and on prestigious universities and career paths

* A focus on attainment, rather than engagement with education' (p3)

which, they say, do not place enough emphasis on learning from the working-class perspective. The link between poverty and educational underachievement is well documented through extensive research (Perry and Francis 2010; Ofsted 2013); however it is not simply a 'cause and effect' situation, but a much more complex relationship. The theory of cultural deprivation blames the social environment for educational failure, and the deficiencies are regarded in terms of linguistic deprivation, cognitive, experiential and personality deficiencies and 'poor' attitudes and values. Since the 1970s, government agencies and educationalists have responded by increasing support and opportunities to compensate for these perceived deficiencies through the formal and informal curricula. Legislation determined curriculum principles and access to leaning, whilst various publicly funded schemes and initiatives targeted areas of deprivation with

the intention of raising aspirations and self-expectations. Critics of this approach determined that it masked the underlying deficiencies in the educational system itself by placing the blame for underachievement on the child, the family background and the neighbourhood.

The impact of poverty and deprivation on educational attainment is

> '… increasingly recognised as a problem by policy makers, featuring prominently in the
>
> manifestos of the three main parties, and it is also a popular topic in the media.' (Perry
>
> and Francis 2010, p5)

The media is a mechanism used by politicians and policymakers to communicate messages and to highlight distinctions between groups in society, adding further to the sense of exclusion, as illustrated earlier in Fig. 1. In this respect, they are not a neutral entity. They also have political affiliations that may bias reporting and produce a politicised account. Media reporting reinforces class distinctions through deficit discourses portraying the working class as irresponsible and lacking in aspiration and motivation (Reay 2009). The situation is compounded by structural issues, which equate working-class pupils with poor-performing schools and low-income families with limited mobility experiencing restricted choices in terms of primary schools (Cassen and Kingdon 2007; Kerr and West 2010). It is very concerning that schools, which are regarded by the policymakers and politicians as instrumental in narrowing the attainment gap and reducing inequalities (Munn 2010), actually contribute to widening the divide by stigma-labelling, bullying and creating structures and demands that the poor simply cannot compete with (symbolic violence).

To be able to communicate attainment requires a degree of literacy and language, and language is embedded in social relationships and interactions (Bourdieu 1984). The acquisition and use of language underpins all learning and its assessment and is a core strand of the British educational system. What was said *and* heard particularly interested Bourdieu, and the way one speaks and the language one uses to communicate are also significant in identifying social position. Language can identify groups – class and cultural groups (youth groups: rapping, gangster-speak) – and can exert significant power and pressure over

individuals and groups. Bernstein (1975) was also interested in language but as a means by which education reproduced inequalities. He argued that during a child's early years, different backgrounds resulted in different forms of speech which later impacted on their progress in school. Working-class children use 'a restricted code' which relies on 'unstated assumptions' that are expected to be known by the speaker. 'A restricted code is a type of speech tied to its own cultural setting' (Giddens 2008, p.708), and it is common among lower-class families and neighbourhoods. Middle-class children use elaborate codes and are more able to generalise and express abstract ideas because they are given reasons and explanations for why things are so. This acquisition of elaborate codes helps to make formal education more accessible to children brought up in this way, and creates barriers for those who are not. Thus, language is a significant identifier of class and culture, and for many working-class children school represents a real cultural challenge. Teaching staff generally have a far greater command of language in terms of both meaning and use, but even they can find effective communication with their students difficult to achieve. Indeed, for Bourdieu,

> '… linguistic relations are always relations of power (*rapports de force*) and, consequently, cannot be elucidated within the compass of linguistic analysis alone. Even the simplest linguistic exchange brings into play a complex and ramifying web of historical power relations between the speaker, endowed with a specific social authority, and an audience, which recognizes this authority to varying degrees, as well as between the groups to which they respectively belong.' (Jenkins 2002; p.154)

A lack of language is a limiting feature of all capitals and contributes to social and educational exclusion, further excluding some children and young people from educational achievement and future prospects in work and social groupings. Policymakers and educationalists have a social and moral responsibility to develop inclusion for all, and schools face increasing pressure to narrow and close the attainment gap, which the Schools' Minister David Laws commented on in his speech to the Association of School and College Leaders,

'OFSTED is also doing much more to hold schools to account for closing the attainment gaps. Solid overall attainment is no longer enough to secure a "Good" or "Outstanding" classification, if there are large performance gaps. The Chief Inspector for Schools and I both agree that a school simply cannot be regarded as "Outstanding" if it is failing its disadvantaged pupils, and he will look at this when he next revises the inspection framework.' (Laws 2013)

According to Kendall et al. (2008), research shows that there has been some improvement in closing the gap on educational underachievement, but it is down to individual schools and not indicative of a strategy success. In some instances, the attainment has improved for all pupils, resulting in the gap staying as it was. Despite best efforts so far, there is still a precarious 'bottom' of 15% of the population who are marginalised through deprivation. Our educational system and meritocratic approach to success reinforce the distinctions between the included and the excluded, and, as with much of society, the educational system appears to be punishing the impoverished (Wacquant 2009). For this research, it was important to establish the relationship between underperformance and deprivation rather than assume poverty causes lack of progress. To be 'poor' and have a 'poor' class identity is one thing, but to use that construct to create and perpetuate social divisions is more akin to the behaviour, and therefore *culture,* of society, which I will turn to next.

Culture

In a simplistic sense, culture describes the symbolic and learned aspects of human society and the differences between various races, which are studied through the material artefacts of a society, its collective library of literature and art, usually referred to as 'high culture', which was also associated with a measure of refinement or 'taste' – a symbolic system based on social judgement that distinguished the middle and upper classes from the working classes. The study of culture played an important part in understanding the way in which societies and social order developed and were played out (Clarke 1976),

deviating from the arts to norms, values and lifestyles which weave the complex relationship between class and culture even tighter in ever-present struggles, as Proctor (2004) identifies:

' … the study of culture involves exposing the relations of power that exist within society at any given moment in order to consider how marginal, or subordinate groups might secure or win, however temporarily, cultural space from the dominant group.' (Proctor 2004, p2)

In the context of children and young people, youth and learning, the exploration of culture in this study will concentrate primarily on those aspects which influence the target group of school-age teenagers, namely popular culture and control, the subculture of youth and the place of identity within these ideas, and will link them to the dynamics of learning in a PRU environment where applicable. Generally speaking, popular culture refers to the accumulation and consumption of cultural products produced by the mainstream groups of society (music, art, fashion and media) for its own entertainment, and it is particularly appealing to the young. Whilst some regard popular culture as a means of 'brainwashing' the masses – for example by using media to influence and control the way people view their world – others see it as a way of rebelling against the more dominant, controlling groups.   Hall argued (in Morley and Chen (eds.) 1996) that:

'For something to become popular entails a struggle; it is never a simple process … . It doesn't just happen. And that means there must be always some distance between the immediate practical consciousness or common sense of ordinary people, and what it is possible for them too become.' (p141)

Struggle brings about change, and change brings new meaning, and this can be a learning process for those struggling to learn, as with some excluded children.   Changing the dynamics of the moment changes the configuration of the cultural space, potentially stimulating further conflict and change. In the PRU, adults and students brought their cultural traits (economic, social, heritage) with them each day. The ensuing

social interactions worked at different times either in tandem or in opposition, to produce a new culture for the moment. The ethos or culture of the classroom could be easily dislocated, for example when a new student arrived or when a different person entered the room.

In this respect, the classroom, and indeed the PRU, was a site of constant, actual, and potential conflict, which in Bourdieu's terminology is represented as a 'field' and explained as,

> '... a structured system of social positions – occupied either by individuals or institutions – the nature of which defines the situation for their occupants. It is also a system of forces which exist between these positions; a field is structured internally in terms of power relations. Positions stand in relationships of domination, subordination or equivalence (homology) to each other by virtue of the access they afford to the goods or resources (capital), which are at stake in the field. ... The existence of a field *presupposes* and, in its functioning, *creates* a belief on the part of participants in the legitimacy and value of the capital which is at stake in the field. This legitimate *interest* in the field is produced by the same historical processes which produce the field itself. ' (Jenkins 2002, p.85)

The PRU, as such a field, was occupied by individuals between whom there were power relationships. Social space is full of interrelated and overlapping fields and individuals operate in many different fields, within school, within their social networks, the family and their work. Practice in each field can differ and individuals learn and experiment with the rules in each. Part of the inscription process (Bourdieu 1984; Skeggs 2004) enables us to know intuitively what the expected practice or behaviour is in different fields, and this allows us to move seamlessly between them. Difficulties arise when there are gaps in this understanding and individuals find themselves in an alien environment, not knowing what to do or expect; for example, when the first or eldest child within a working-class family goes to university (before familiarisation days were part of preparations for higher education). Nothing in the young person's history would have prepared them for such an experience, and to get things wrong (misrecognition) could be devastatingly embarrassing. Quinn (2010) explains this process of learning to belong in terms of self-

managing emotions and learning which emotions are acceptable to perform in whatever learning community an individual is in. This inevitably leads to suppressing certain feelings and/or revealing them at the wrong time/place, and may also involve manipulating when to suppress/reveal feelings, for example producing 'fuzzy' accounts when embarrassed about what may be perceived as low social, cultural and economic capitals. When those from more advantaged backgrounds know the disadvantages of their opponents but 'play the game' without questioning the rules, symbolic violence occurs. Symbolic violence may be described as the imposition of systems of symbolism on groups presented in such a way that they are viewed as legitimate and the power relations are obscured. This enables the imposition to be successful – such as implemented educational systems. Further, an important feature of the school system was to perpetuate it as a field that is distinct from any other.

> 'The boundaries of fields are imprecise and shifting, determinable only by empirical research, although they include various institutionally constituted points of entry.   The boundary of any given field, the point(s) at which the field ceases to have any impact on practice, is always at stake in the struggles which take place within the field.' (Jenkins 2002, p85)

It is around the boundaries (that in schools are identified by rules or codes of conduct) that power relationships are most noticeable, and although Bourdieu explains power as something created through cultural and symbolic means, Jenkins (2001) observed that Bourdieu's approach showed an 'inability to understand resistance' (p123). From Bourdieu's perspective, when individuals start to engage with and manipulate the rules of a social situation in order to distinguish themselves from others in the same arena, 'agency' or the personal capacity to do/use emerges. This is a sort of status, and is determined by how much cultural or symbolic capital is possessed in relation to others, and in this respect 'positioning' is important and coexists with domination, power struggles and conflict. Consequently, power individualises those that have it. I conceptualised the PRU as a dynamic, social entity; some individuals were in it because they chose to be, such as the staff, whilst students were sent there. There was a hierarchy of status and power relations which were at work within the PRU, and the uniqueness of each individual and their relationships with each other characterised the ethos and impact of the PRU as an organisation. The PRU

imposed power systems of symbolism and meaning (staff attitudes and expectations; codes of conduct, etc.) with the legitimacy of being an approved or socially accepted organisation – a school – to which students react through acts of resistance and compliance. When children demonstrate resistance, adults can see this as antisocial behaviour, persistent disruptive behaviour or rebelliousness. Willis (1977) associated this student behaviour with the working-class cultural background, which was often at odds with the middle-class values of staff. The tensions thus created contributed to the organisational culture operating within the PRU. There will be more discussion about acts of teenage rebelliousness later.

Hockey and James (1993), argued that those who are marginalised and excluded from society are capable of resisting their status and do so in three broad ways: firstly, by using alternative sources of power to resist, such as wealth or affluence and the withdrawal of labour; secondly, by denying membership of a group and pretending to belong to a higher-status group; and thirdly, by being a member of a disadvantaged social group, which can itself be a source of power and can provide a means to mock the way one is treated, much as the working class mocks the middle class. Resistance occurs in many guises, both subtle and overt. Subtlety tends to be associated with adults, where resistance or non-compliance may be identified as 'principled infidelity' or 'principled retreatism', which Hoyle and Wallace (2005) described as: ' …not a 'cowardly' act but a principled rejection of the goals and means of education as incorporated in the reforms' (p156). When children display similar attitudes it is interpreted differently and can result in exclusion.

Culture and 'capital'

Bourdieu's work has been influential in bringing understanding to social life and has provided inspiration for others (Dillabough and Kennelly 2012; Quinn 2010; Skeggs 2004; Willis 1977), with the result that his concept of 'capital' has been expanded further. Of particular interest for this research were social, cultural, symbolic, and imagined capitals as dimensions of popular culture. In this section, I will explain each form of capital and its importance to the research.

Bourdieu used the term 'capital' … to describe the stakes in social fields' (Jenkins 2002, p86) such as wealth (economic capital), power (symbolic capital) and culture (taste and social capital), and he believed that through the education system, wealth and power could be translated into culture. Like the uneven distribution of wealth and power, culture is also unevenly distributed, thus contributing to the distinctions between the social classes and the attainment gap, as noted earlier. Children from the professional middle classes inherit a stock of cultural capital by exposure to 'high culture' and familial training to appreciate it. The dominant middle-class meritocracy of the education system reinforces and enhances cultural competences gained in this way, thus perpetuating the importance of distinction and protecting the gateways into lucrative, high-status professions and managerial positions. Subsequent access to further high culture is then passed on to the next generation of children, ensuring that they in turn will convert their cultural capital into economic capital when they become employed (cultural reproduction).

One of Bourdieu's important perspectives was that to move in the social space required an *exchange* between the capitals a person has command of; for example, economic capital (salary) is converted or exchanged for symbolic capital (promotion into a higher-paid and more responsible job), which brings more status through reputation and the acquisition of more assets or symbols of success (bigger house, latest model of car, designer clothes). This is often the 'carrot' that the middle classes uses to motivate the working classes into buying into their meritocratic education system rather than, as Perry and Francis (2010) identified earlier, creating a system that embraces working-class values and perceptions. In relation to the creation and implementation of structures of control, Skeggs' (2004) posed the question 'In whose interests … '(p5). This is important here, as those with legitimised power and authority, such as policymakers and professionals, link motive with creating identity and establishing a social position. Legitimation, according to Skeggs (2004), '… is the key mechanism in the conversion to power. Cultural capital has to be legitimated before it can have symbolic power' (p17). Once any form of capital is seen to be legitimate it takes on symbolic significance and can be used to exert power and influence over others.

Social capital is generally interpreted as referring to the bonds between individuals that drive them to form groups, which may network and socialise, and is therefore useful to individuals and society as a whole (Putnam 2000). Bourdieu described social capital as:

'… the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p119)

Membership of these groups can bring an added status, depending on the material assets or symbolic attachments they may have, and members usually have to work at maintaining their place, particularly as they are constructed on inequalities between members and, according to Mayo (2000) increasing social capital for some reduces access for others. Whilst this may be an accepted view, I am inclined to believe that the *presence* of social capital in some people intimidates others not to compete for access.

At the heart of social capital is the sense of belonging: being part of something and being recognised as belonging to this group or that place so that others can find you. Quinn (2010) says that this is not about being stuck or trapped by circumstances but that it is about movement – because movement gets people noticed. Teenagers who act out in schools do tend to get noticed and moved; they are extracted from certain groups and activities before ultimately being excluded. As they change classes, groups and eventually schools, they can develop a nomadic existence through compulsory schooling; they are a frequent stranger in many classes, becoming increasingly obvious or invisible, and they learn how *not* to belong with more than adequate support from other learners, adults and systems (Quinn 2010). In this sense, ' … social capital is just a nasty exclusionary device …' (Gauntlett 2011, p3) used by some groups of like-minded individuals to exclude particular (undesirable) elements from their social circles and networks. Wheeler (cited in Grimm 2012, p6) says that the ability and desire to exclude others stems from an 'innate understanding' of the human condition and the ability to exploit a sense of 'belonging' and identity, which is something that girls in particularly are good at. In addition, new technologies have produced social network Internet sites that enable individuals to develop huge networks of people they can interact with – without ever meeting them. This introduces other cultural issues of safeguarding, risk and exploitation, especially among vulnerable young people. The Internet itself is a massive social 'field', and, as with mobile

phone and mobile communication, is very appealing to modern youth, particularly as a status symbol and fashion statement (Katz and Sugiyama 2005).

These forms of social capital are what Quinn (2010) termed literal and 'real', but she described another form that she labelled 'imagined social capital', which originates from the symbolic and imagined networks that people create for themselves and create an identity with, and which sustains them in difficult times without having a direct link to the source. People identify with successful and admired 'others' by proxy; it makes them feel better, it gives them a sense of belonging and it can boost confidence, self-esteem and resiliency. It is a mechanism for protecting a fragile inner-self. There are bias implications for imagined social capital in research methodology, particularly in capturing the 'voice' of young people in the field, which I will address later in Chapter 3.

The final thinking tool of Bourdieu's to be discussed is 'habitus', which I have deliberately left until last because it provides an appropriate link to the next section in which the issues of identity, class and culture fuse in the subculture of youth. Bourdieu saw that each aspect of social life has its own social order that is established through custom and practice or codes of behaviour, which individuals acquire intuitively and through experience. He referred to this as 'habitus', the inscripted knowledge and insights gained from *culture* (linguistic development and experience) and education. Habitus is an acquired set of dispositions of thought, behaviour and taste, shaped by the choices individuals make and blended with the experiences of their interactions with others, and their responses to their environment – which ultimately determines who they are and how they respond. According to Jenkins (2002), ' ... the habitus is the source of "objective" practice, but is itself a set of "subjective" generative principles produced by the "objective" patterns of social life' (p 82). Purcell (1988) illustrated how this worked in a group of female factory workers that she studied (the passive worker thesis). For their entertainment, the women were disposed to reading popular magazine horoscopes, which Purcell argued was a reflection of their intellectually underprivileged state compared to their male counterparts, who preferred the less fatalistic pursuit of betting. She concluded that these women workers were more stable and exploitable than men because they had a fatalist approach to life that could be attributed to a combination of gender, socialisation and biology that was reinforced by the habitus of other working-class women in the same environment. If that

is the case, then not only can fatalism or acceptance be passed on to children through cultural reproduction but it would certainly shape their attitudes and values as they grow up and would potentially impact on their behaviours in school. The potential problem is compounded if the fatalistically passive mother is the sole parent, as in many dysfunctional families. Economically bereft, single mothers and children struggle with '… what analysts today call "the feminization of poverty" …' (Rubin 1992, pxxiii).

Skeggs' (2004) research involving white working-class women presented a perspective that is both similar and different. For her, the issue was not fatalism but inscription, which she asserts shapes people and their behaviours through exposure and experience. The process of inscription is '… the way value is transferred onto bodies and read off them, and the mechanism by which it is retained, accumulated, lost or appropriated' (ibid., p13). The women in Skeggs' (2004) research had limited or restricted capitals, which produced an impoverished identity. Working-class men were more able to generate a positive identity, and this was used to position her research group as of lower status than their male counterparts, causing the women to deny their class identity and in doing so actually accentuating it. In this way, social class is a form of inscription and a shaper of habitus. Habitus also constitutes what it is to be working class (Archer et al. 2010) and, by definition, middle or upper class, racialised or gendered (ibid.). Further, Archer et al. (2010), in discussing the impact of habitus on the aspirations of young people said, 'Their sense of what might be normal, appropriate and desirable was also shaped by their habitus, which was constituted by (and constitutive of) their social locations' (ibid., p93). Their social locations might be home, school or places within their community, which Quinn (2010), said held '… strong emotional ties but (was) also a carrier of shame and stigma …' (p89). Children and young people know very early on in their lives what sort of home or area they live in compared to others in their school, class or friendship groups, and sometimes this bonds them with others of similar habitus and sometimes they are markedly ashamed of their origins or are angry (Dillabough and Kennelly 2010; Rubin 1992). It is now time to turn more specifically to issues of youth.

Culture and identity within youth culture

Culture is a complicated phenomenon of identity; it applies not only to notions of 'class', but also to a wide range of social groups of which youth is one. Identity is the description of oneself (individual or group) by oneself (individual or group), is sometimes referred to as the 'self' and is integral to social life and relational to others (Jenkins 1996). Some aspects of identity are internal and subjective; others are external and dependent on the views of others. Woodward (2000) says that identity is always formed through a combination of individual agency and structural constraint. It is constantly evolving as the habitus expands via added social experiences and changed capitals that become markers of 'self' reflected in changing affiliations, fashion and material assets which are also used to position individuals and groups without a fixed point of origin (Hall in Morley and Chen, 1996). Muggleton (2000) determined that most young people were more concerned with asserting their own individuality rather than a group identity and that although you had to fit in with others you also had to stand out and be different. This might also be, in part, because taking responsibility for a group identity requires strong-self belief in the first instance, coupled with the ability to lead others.

We have already noted how changes in the national economic climate impacted on class by reducing work opportunities and changing the economy from one with an industrial/manufacturing base to a knowledge–based economy. This also led to a cultural change as young people stayed in the family home for longer, were dependent on the family resources for identity formation and were exposed to the ongoing internal relations between themselves and their parents and siblings for longer too (Arnot 2003). Arnot (2003) also said 'Parents interpret the world and instil attitudes and dispositions which are assessments of "possibilities and impossibilities" within objectively inscribed conditions' (p110). These attitudes contribute to what Bourdieu (1990) described as a 'matrix of perceptions', which produced 'a framed field of reference' (Foskett and Hesketh 1996); this may be 'loose or tight', and is established by their parents (Ball et al. 2000), and although parents in working-class families might appear to let their children make their own choices in relation to which school, job and training opportunities they choose, they still care about and feel concerned for their children.

To better understand how youth creates its own unique identity and culture and what that means in terms of making progress in schools, I reviewed the following themes for this particular discourse: popular culture, identity, respect and belonging, and resistance and voice.   As seen earlier, popular culture is created for mass consumption and is particularly relevant to youth as an expression of their interests and identity.   To illustrate this I have selected the phenomenon of the mobile phone, which to young people is:

> '… a physical icon … an item of decorative display related to fashion and design … the
>
> mobile phone is strongly connected with ingrained human perceptions of distance,
>
> power, status and identity.' (Katz and Sugiyama 2005, p63)

Which colour, make and model of phone to own and what functionality it possesses are important distinctions of taste and social standing among young people. Mobile phones today can be adorned with precious stones and metals and accessorised with cases, ringtones and decals.   They store music collections, games, videos and maps, as well as enabling easy communication across vast distances with any number of people.   They are also used to create an identity:

> '… users are more than mere consumers. They are also co-creators. They achieve this
>
> status by, after purchase, further manipulating these devices to reflect personal tastes
>
> and to represent themselves to the outside world.' (ibid., p79)

In addition to maintaining connections with people they know, mobile phones enable easy access to social networking sites, which enable young people to connect with strangers under the guise of being 'friends'. The size of the 'friends' list can also be used as an indicator of status among young people and can leave them vulnerable to seeking more connections, and open to being 'groomed' for illegal and exploitive activities. Unfortunately, this technology is not always used innocently.   Increasingly, it is used to be abusive or to humiliate others (www.childline.org.uk), causing immense distress. Children are particularly vulnerable to attack, which, because it is remotely triggered, can happen at any time and can reach a large audience, instantly compounding the sense of public humiliation even further.   In this situation, far from

being a fashion statement, mobile technology is a weapon of domination and destruction of the 'self' by others.

In the social space, imagery about attractiveness and fashion, etc. entices people to spend money; teenagers are as susceptible as anyone to the sophistication of advertising, which aims to exploit, '… penetrate and reconfigure everyday culture.' (Dillabough and Kennelly, p80).   Young people are distinguished from older generations through their taste in music, clothing, technology, behaviour and use of language, and as a consequence they become demonised, intimidating, fearsome and fearless. Policymakers and the media pounce on this image and fuel public perceptions by reporting negative images in a high profile way, and thus

> '… the child moves through Whitehall growing and shrinking like Alice: in the Department of
> Health she is a potential victim, at the Treasury and Department for Education a growing
> but silent unit of investment, but at the Home Office a huge and threatening yob.' (Sleaford
> 2001, p464)

As the public perception about youth deteriorated, Brownlie (2010) asserted:

> '… that unable to gain respect from wider society, "postmodern urban youth" seek
> affirmation from others occupying similar subject positions to their own, in order to attain
> recognition, respect and ontological security. … young people learn to negotiate identity
> projects without seeking affirmation from dominant cultures, aware that it will not be
> received. Instead, postmodern urban youth associate with others who share similar cultural
> understandings, who *will* "respect" them for the subject positions they *are* able to occupy.'
> (ibid., p1)

In this perspective, when youth is alienated or excluded from the wider society for being disrespectful, they turn to each other for recognition according to their own criteria and positioning in that mini-society of youth: some may join gangs. At odds with the world about them, some of the more disaffected elements of youth may develop an anti-authority, resistant culture, which places them in conflict with parents, teachers

and the police. Thus, wider society has unintentionally caused gangs to develop and the prevailing attitudes perpetuate them too.

In 'Resistance through Rituals' (Hall and Jefferson 1976), youth culture was explored in detail and the creative response or resistance of young people to the class situation they were in was highlighted; the authors illustrated how identity masked class and challenged the status quo around youth subcultures. 'Resistance through Rituals' (1976) described issues of negotiation, resistance and struggle as:

> '… the relations between a subordinate and dominant culture [and] wherever they fall within this spectrum are always intensely active, always oppositional, in a structural sense … .Their outcome is not given but *made*. The subordinate class brings to this "theatre of struggle" a repertoire of strategies and responses – ways of coping as well as resisting. Each strategy in the repertoire mobilises certain real material and social elements: it constricts these into the supports for the different ways the class lives and resists its continuing subordination.' (Hall and Jefferson 1976, p44)

In a youth context, the 'struggle' causes young people to develop ways of coping (resiliency) as well as ways of antagonising (resisting) pressure to conform to certain values and actions within the family, the community and a wider society, and this might entail bonding with other like-minded individuals with whom they become identified. Tackling gangs and antisocial behaviour were key themes of 'The Respect Action Plan' launched by New Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair in 2006 in an attempt to refocus the nation's moral compass and youth:

> '[respect] cannot be achieved by Government alone … ultimately every citizen has a responsibility to behave in a respectful way and to support the community around them in doing the same.' (Respect Task Force 2006, p3)

This approach suggests that respect is an earned commodity, and Millie (2009) explained that the government's position

> '… is one of *securing respect,* with a heavy emphasis on enforcing standards of behaviour; for instance, that young people will be "made to take the help they need". … Like anti-social behaviour, it (respect) is an extremely slippery concept, but it has something to do with morality, mutuality, reciprocity and maintaining standards of behaviour in public places.' (p3, my italics)

From this perspective, the idea of securing respect is predicated on the understanding and expectation that individuals will defer to the authority of others, indicating an inferior/superior structure. This raises a philosophical issue: if respect is earned, how, then, can individuals be of equal worth and expect to be treated with equal respect? In answer to this dilemma, Darwall (1977) identified two types of respect: recognition respect and appraisal respect. Recognition respect equates to people's right to be treated with respect, whereas 'when we speak of someone as meriting or deserving our respect, it is appraisal respect we have in mind.' (Darwall 1977, p39)*.* Appraisal respect is the search for self-respect and identity formation, and this is an important theme for youth.

Rejected from wider society, various youth subcultures - including gangs - provide a haven of belonging for socially excluded young people. Different subcultures have different identities and rituals that distinguish them from others. Hall and Jefferson (1976) exemplified this with the Teddy Boys, who constituted a distinct working-class youth culture; they were not involved with the classic class struggle, but established their identity through dress and fighting. Mods and Rockers were two competing youth cultures based on gang affiliations. Mods identified themselves by sharp dressing, short haircuts, scooters, pills (speed) and rhythm and blues clubs. In contrast, Rockers adopted leather clothing, long hair and motorbikes, and were intent on having a good time though drink, drugs and rock and roll music. These groups effectively formed gangs up and down the country, and confrontations between them were commonplace. Skinheads followed, and were more violent and often extremely prejudiced against other cultures – particularly blacks and Jews. The Charver Kids were originally synonymous with young, white working-class trash, although

they later became popular with celebrities through the impact of their music and fashion, and other groups formed around families, territories (usually cities) football teams and race (Nayak 2003), wreaking havoc through hooliganism which used the idea of belonging to a particular group, club or place as a reason to 'defend' it through violence and destruction. Racial tensions were ignored as policymakers focused on class and gender issues, and young blacks in particular were aware of their social exclusion as a raced process, which, according to Wright et al. (2010), ' … was understandable given the widespread belief that black youth are troublesome, aggressive and anti-education' (p37) and that '… black students are construed as threatening, menacing and the product of inadequate parenting' (ibid., p38). Stereotyping, unfair surveillance and punishment drove many young black people out of the mainstream, and they coalesced into gangs with their own distinct culture that was reflected in music and fashion and that also became part of popular culture. In response to the threat of fascism and the far right, they also formed some very vicious high-profile street gangs that staged bloody turf wars in some of our UK cities, such as the notorious Johnson Crew and Burger Bar Boys in Birmingham (also known by their postcodes of B6 and B21), and The Peckham Boys in London. Gangs are not a new phenomenon; they have a long history with crime and disorder and the creation of an identity, using media technology to promote that identity into popular culture (CSJ 2009; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YH0LUt8R2k).

Although the definitions that follow are not confined to the young hooligan, they are often regarded as '… the aggressively masculine anti-school, anti-social young male' (Delamont 2000, p96). Delamont (2000), commenting on UK studies of working-class boys identified as 'hooligans' said:

> '… the anti-school, delinquent, rebellious young working-class urban males have been
>
> lovingly chronicled and even celebrated as heroes, although they epitomise everything
>
> no sociologist would actually want to live next door to in real life, and are the
>
> embodiment of the opposite of the social mobility grand narrative which produced the
>
> sociologist. Most of the male sociologists who have lovingly chronicled the rebellion
>
> and resistance of the hooligans to schooling are themselves the heroic products of the
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> social mobility grand narrative of their subdiscipline. They worked hard at school, did
>
> their homework, passed exams, took the advice of teachers, went to university and

became academics. … However, once middle-class, they have not only studied but lionised, the very type of boys from whom they had to hide in the playground.'

(Delamont 2000, p99)

Embedded in the DNA of this passage are issues relating to the class and cultural distinctions between the researched and the researcher and the bond of masculinity that romanticises the behaviour of and distorts the understanding and place of the school rebel.   Perhaps this is a reverse imagined social capital on behalf of the researchers in identifying themselves with the exploits of the rebel, perhaps they may have *liked* to dare to take part in such exploits but were constrained by the values and expectations of their own class up bringing? Delamont (2000) is critical of Willis, whom she believed had ' … misrepresented the heroism of hooligans …' (p108) in his acclaimed study of working-class 'lads'.

Early studies on gangs (Short and Hughes 2006) tended to concentrate on acts of juvenile delinquency from an external perspective rather than exploring the reasons and methodology behind the research. In truth, the young people who 'drop out' of the mainstream for whatever reason are by definition 'hard to reach', and as a result, their views are not represented in issues of policy and practice despite the fact that ' … what students say about teaching, learning and schooling is not only worth listening to but provides an important – perhaps the most important – foundation for thinking about ways of improving schools' (Rudduck et al. 1996, p1). Indeed, '[t]he duty of educators is thus framed as empowering students to speak and to do everything they can to "listen to the voices of learners".' (Quinn 2010, p16) is incorporated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is the driving ambition of the Children's Commissioner's Participation Strategy 2013 for Children and Young People (Atkinson 2013b). Archer et al. (2010) highlights the point that the voice of young people is not representative, '[w]hen young people are given the space to speak, the voices heard usually belong to those who are educationally successful' (ibid., p19). Not only is it difficult to connect with socially excluded young people, but there are issues relating to the integrity and authenticity of what they say and who they are representing (Archer et al. 2010; Dillabough and Kennelly 2010; Quinn 2010).   The narrator has power over what is said and disclosed; it belongs to them alone. Simply because someone is on a mission to find something out does not give them the authority to demand

to know another's deepest thoughts and feelings. That information is a gift, and some thoughts and feelings just cannot be told or expressed (Quinn 2010). Sometimes, admitting to what their real world is like because it is so horrible, some will imagine a better place which is described by 'tracing lines of flight' (Tamboukou cited in Quinn 2010, p35) – an imagined distraction into a better place. For a young person, this might mean, for example, wanting to become a professional footballer whereas the reality is that they do not have the necessary skills and are likely to have a very low-status job if they can actually get work at all. Among their peers and perhaps among their teachers, they do not want to admit to being inadequate so they live the dream for the moment and it makes them feel better; they protect a fragile inner-self. In some instances, subjects respond to questions about their thoughts and feelings with 'OK', a closed response to an open question. The term 'OK' can signify a number of meanings such as 'stop' or 'all's well/fine'. According to Dillabough and Kennelly (2010), it may also reflect acceptance or even ambivalence, which is described as a form of 'working class resilience or refusal … in order not to be overwhelmed' (p149).

An extensive national framework (in itself a cultural development) emerged to protect children and young people from harm, which also imposed constraints on what young people could do and were expected to do, depicting youth as impulsive and problematic. This perception, '[t]his "disrespectful youth" subject position which was created within a political sphere was then diffused into public discourse through interactive positioning' (Brownlie, 2010; p34). In shaping identities, young people are working with the tensions to be individual and different, and to be noticed as well as identifying with others who are needed to endorse their behaviour and at the same time, with whom they are also competing for attention. They strive to become individual within a group. Balancing the demands of different cultures and subcultures is hard work and often stressful for young people, especially at a time when their physical and emotional development is still under construction.

Culture, youth and gender

As already reported, there had been a shift in media attention and in policy from girls' educational underperformance to that of boys, and boys were most likely to be excluded from school – usually for violent or persistent disruptive behaviour. What we do not know is how many children really are 'at risk' of exclusion in schools because there are no means of gathering that information other than by counting those who are relocated through 'managed moves' protocols. This also means that we have no sure way of knowing the gender or race differentials in terms of unacceptable behaviour (as recorded by adults) in schools, which are notoriously inconsistent because the thresholds for acceptable behaviour vary between schools and among the staff within schools (DfE 2012b; Rutter et al. 1979).

Willis (1977) determined that it was the working-class and cultural background of 'the lads' in his study that prepared them for a manual job in terms of expectations of what they would do and the aptitude for it. 'The lads' were easily identified by their 'general and personalised opposition to "authority"' that was particularly insubordinate and impertinent. They marked themselves apart from others of the same age (usually 15- and 16-year-olds) by partially complying with the school rules and routines – the everyday problematic was that they cannily knew where to draw the line so as to do just enough work to avoid exclusion whilst continually sabotaging and distracting teaching and learning activities through persistent disruptive behaviour.

> 'Opposition to the school is principally manifested in the struggle to win symbolic and
> physical space from the institution and its rules and to defeat its main perceived purpose:
> to make you "work".' (Willis 1977, p26)

Through this behaviour, 'the lads' exercised a degree of control over their environment and whoever else became caught up in it with them at that time. They truanted, drank, smoked, fought, thieved and became involved in antisocial behaviour; they were renowned for dares, pranks and practical jokes. The working-class students that Willis described did not do so well at school but, like their parents, seemed to manage

well enough at work because the shop-floor culture and their own counter-school culture were closely aligned. The characteristics of Willis's lads were similar to many of those of the students within the PRU in that their presenting behaviours were designed to create disruption.   The PRU population consisted of young people who were daring to challenge the established social values and pressure to acquire core skills and strong qualifications. In schools, they were dispersed amongst a much bigger student population. In the PRU, they were a concentrated force. McRobbie (1980), commenting on Willis's study, said, '[t]heir (the lads) peer group consciousness and pleasure frequently seem to hinge on a collective disregard for women and the sexual exploitation of girls' (p40). McRobbie (1980) also highlighted the degrading use of sexualised language as an aggressive demonstration of masculinity towards women and girls, and Arnot (2003) concluded:

> 'The violence of the imagery, the cruelty of "the lads"' sexual double standard, the images of sexual power and domination become the "lads" last defensive resort. By dignifying these racist, sexist and homophobic "lads" McRobbie and later Skeggs (1992) argued that Willis's project failed to understand the articulation of male power and domination.'
> (p107)

Bourdieu (1984) and Willis (1977) were criticised for not taking account of gender in their respective studies (Arnot 2003; McRobbie 1980; Skeggs 2004) and, as a consequence, their omissions highlighted the issue stimulating attention and research. Thus far, this literature review has illustrated class and culture issues affecting young people from a predominantly masculine perspective. However, youth is a gendered subject, and with this is mind I will now look at the impact of social exclusion amongst female working-class school-age teenagers, as they also feature in the research study.

Lloyd (2006, p2) acknowledged that 'educational concerns are currently highly gendered' and that '[b]oys dominate the statistics for disciplinary exclusion …' in a ratio of 3:1 (DfE 2013). The consequence of this was that exclusion amongst girls was not seen as a problem and girls were largely 'invisible' to policymakers and professionals, resulting in more self-exclusions by girls and inappropriate and ineffectual strategies for

supporting girls to access learning (Osler et al. 2002a). There was a greater tendency to review girls' issues in terms of health/pregnancy and boys' in terms of antisocial behaviour; girls tend to withdraw from conflicts or distress and boys tend to become big and loud. In a PRU population, which is dominated by boys (3:1), girls are a minority, marginalised group.

Research (Leckie 1998; Thorne and Luria 1986) showed that girls and boys deal with each other differently: boys tend to be more physical and girls more verbal, sharing their feelings and aspirations more readily, which also makes them more vulnerable to humiliation. Girls more readily resort to covert social psychological exclusion strategies in friendship groups as a way of dominating and positioning themselves. They will spread rumours, fabricate nasty stories, refuse to speak to particular girls for reasons relating to petty jealousies, exclude them from events and ridicule and criticise their appearance. Although not as visible as the bonds in male-dominated gangs, the bonding among girls is equally strong but more insidious. In terms of gendered classroom behaviours, research has shown that girls receive less teacher attention than boys and are usually quieter in the classroom (Stanworth 1981); girls' resistance to learning is characterised by persistent chatter and fiddling with their appearance, which often goes unnoticed (Osler et al. 2002b); girls take up less space (Connolly 2003); girls help teachers and boys by distributing equipment and supporting boys with their learning (Belotti 1975); and in the classroom, girls take a submissive role compared to boys, reinforcing the gendered distinctions in the process (Reay 2001). The 'invisibleness' of girls cloaks their resistance strategies, making them subversive. The more visible and vocal behaviours of boys act as both foil and fuel, and in this way, boys and girls together can orchestrate classroom disruption, leaving the teacher outmanoeuvred, marginalised and in trouble.

More recently, girls who were excluded or who were at risk of school exclusion often challenged conventional gender stereotypes, behaving much more like antisocial male adolescents by brawling and shouting abusively. These young women, whom the media dubbed 'ladettes' and whom Skeggs (2004) referred to as 'hens', gathered in 'parties' rather than gangs and threatened the social space because of their overt out-of-control presence, working-class vulgarity, perceived lack of value and perceived lack of femininity, which Skeggs (2004, p167) pointed out '… was always something that did not designate working class women precisely … '. They were effectively acting in an anti-feminine way:

'… so the highly visible, scantily dressed women who make up "hen parties" are very much a product of … classification history. They are not the universal "pan-feminine" identified by Stacey (2000), but the localized and particular, read as repositories of negative value, bad taste and culture … even though, in terms of the alternatives available, they are strategically investing in themselves and attempting to convert their cultural into economic capital.' (ibid., p167)

Sweeting (2003) identified that girls as young as 15-years old were becoming more visible in public spaces and taking more risks through alcohol and drugs misuse and causing more incidents of disruption and more accidents, which her study concluded resulted from a lifting of social constraints of respectability on the lifestyles of young women. This identification was consistent with some girl students at the PRU and therefore had particular relevance to the study. Osler et al. (2002a) concluded that girls' needs were consistently overlooked in favour of boys'. Popular discourse, according to Jackson (2006), presented girls as more academically 'successful', outperforming boys in exams, and this added to the notion that there was not a problem. The strategy of exclusion used by girls is '… a strong and powerful tool used to negotiate their world and relationships (Wheeler cited in Grimm 2012, p6). This is quite different to the model of exclusion presented in the previous chapter in which systems, policy and publicity converge to exclude. This is bullying and is much more personal; it involves negotiating belonging and identity. It is also much more difficult to detect and respond to and is not confined to one class or another, but indicators include feigning illness, truancy and post-registration truancy (attending registrations only to get attendance marks).

If work was thought to be difficult to secure for boys on leaving school, it was more problematic for girls:

'Just one in a hundred young women worked in skilled trades in 2011, compared to one in five young men. And four times more young women (21 per cent) worked in personal service occupations like hairdressing, leisure and the travel industry in 2011 than young men (5 per cent).' (TUC website 2013)

And,

> '… the overall structure of employment remains highly polarised with men and women
>
> dominating occupations traditionally regarded as male (manual jobs) and female
>
> (caring, retail, and personal service jobs). (Brinkley et al. 2013, p5)

In addition, this report also identified that underemployment (those in part-time work wanting but unable to get more hours) had increased for both males and females, but more so for women and young people, creating a double disadvantage for young women (ibid., p12). Young women are more likely to do unpaid care work, particularly in some ethnic sectors, which reflects cultural attitudes towards the place of women in work and therefore the aspirations of young women. Also, 'roughly three quarters of unemployed young men claim Jobseekers Allowance, compared to just one half of unemployed young women' (ibid., p19), which might be attributed to women being supported by a waged partner. Therefore, whilst education may provide a general introduction for girls and boys to a wider menu of job opportunities, access remains a consistent divider as practicalities and expectations from all around them urge them into traditional occupational routes.

For some, marriage or a committed relationship and having children replaces any desire to develop a career. Enhancing physical attraction becomes an important pastime and, as Archer et al. (2007) argued – a form of capital in the field of heterosexuality. From this perspective, work is important in terms of being able to finance this manipulation of appearance in order to be attractive – physically and sexually. The desire to be physically and sexually attractive becomes an 'Achilles heel' in relationships, and competing for male attention amongst working-class girls is seen as 'excessive' but amongst middle-class girls is regarded as 'restrained'. Archer et al. (2007) also point out that this

> '… investment in heterosexual femininities were not solely organised around power
>
> and pleasure, but were also bound up with anxiety and fear, as girls' inclusion or

exclusion from the peer groups were based upon their conformity to particular

performances of style and appearance … .' (p171)

This conformity was not always ultra-feminine; some adopted a more masculine fashion – a tomboy look, matched with a loud brashness that was intended to set them apart from the crowd, which it did, and in the process 'generated identity and peer capital … that drew them into conflict with the school' (ibid., p177). This was a paradox of competing forms of capital.   Boyfriends held status; not just having one – but who he was held importance too. It is a highly competitive field and the stakes are very high. Archer (et al. 2007) also acknowledged the all-consuming intensity of these relationships whereby girls gave up all their time, friendships and often aspirations to attend to the relationship.   This behaviour creates further complications when the relationship breaks down and the support from friendships is no longer in place, and this can keep young women in relationships that are not healthy for them.

'Hence young working-class women's engagement in heterosexual relationships

appears to be differently (and more narrowly) positioned to that of their male peers

and can contribute to their fixing within less powerful social positions. Within this

field, boundaries of gender appear to collapse leaving working-class young women

with little room for manoeuvre - as …, social mobility would also require … rejection

of classed and gendered sexual relationships.' (ibid., p177)

Working-class girls are therefore caught up in a complex field of competition between middle-class boys and girls, and working-class boys. Their capacity to escape is limited.

Culture and the classroom

Extensive research into pupil behaviour has prompted changes in policy and legislation (DfE 2012b) which affect the way teachers teach, with the intention that the classroom should be a safe and stimulating place in which to learn. Rutter (1991) draws attention to the protective and restorative value of school

experience:

> 'It's no easy matter to create a happy, effective school and there are a variety of influences outside the control of schools. Nevertheless, schooling does matter greatly. Moreover, the benefits can be surprisingly long-lasting. That is not because school experiences have a permanent effect on a child's psychological brain structure, but rather because experiences at one point in a child's life tend to influence what happens afterwards in a complicated set of indirect chain reactions. … School experiences of both academic and non-academic kinds can have a protective effect for children under stress and leading otherwise unrewarding lives … . ' (ibid., p.9)

Some children are more resilient than others and, as a consequence, it is part of cultural evolution that a host of protective systems and factors are embedded in culture (Wright et al., 2013). I have already alluded to the gendered behaviours of students in the classroom and the 'site of struggles' as a field – in this instance the classroom is also a field, and the players (students and staff) have differing capacities in terms of agency and contested power relations.

Consider the following joke sent to me by email and recounted in my reflective journal (23.11.13), which illustrates power and class relationships in the classroom:

'A kindergarten teacher tells her class she's a BIG Aston Villa fan. She's really excited about it and asks the kids if they're Aston Villa fans too. Everyone wants to impress the teacher and says they're Aston Villa fans too, except ONE kid, … named Josh. The teacher looks at Josh and says, "Josh, you're not an Aston Villa fan?" He says, "Nope, I'm a West Bromwich fan!" She says, "Well why are you a West Bromwich fan and not an Aston Villa fan?" Josh says, "Well, my mom is a West Brom fan, and my dad is a West Brom fan, so I'm a West Brom fan." The teacher's not real happy. She's a little hot under the collar. She says, "Well, if your mom's an idiot, and your dads a moron, then what would you be?!" Josh says, "Then I'd be an Aston Villa fan!"

Fig. 5 Class joke (RJ, 23.11.13)

Using the earlier cultural perception (Fig.3), the teacher is middle class. We do not know the class of the children, but can assume they will be both middle and working class. The teacher uses her position and legitimate authority to establish a principle that 'to be in my gang you have to support my football club.' Most children defer to this principle because they either want to belong to the teacher's gang or are frightened of the potential consequences of not being in the teacher's gang – alienation. Josh, however, is not intimidated and stands his ground. The teacher resorts to indirect name-calling to coerce Josh into submission, but he turns the tables on the teacher using her own strategy and humour against her, weakening her position in a classic working-class response (Collinson 1988), which Willis (1977) illustrated in his research: 'Nothing brings out the viciousness of certain working class cultural traits like the plain vulnerability of the mighty fallen' and that '"the lads" give no quarter to a weak opponent' (p80).

Using humour is one way in which young people cope with the ordinary and the extraordinary. Feinstein (2004) said that the teenage brain was susceptible to novelty and that a frequent reason for challenging behaviours was the need for diversion. Willis's work (1977) identified the importance of 'having a laff' among 'the lads', which still persists:

> '… students find creative ways to interrupt the humdrum of exam preparation by
> telling jokes, cutting or walking out of class to roam the hallways, or passing round
> notes or magazines whose content is far more interesting to students than the drone
> of their teachers.' (Nolan and Anyon 2004, p144)

Some young people distinguish themselves by 'clowning around' and creating their own identity around that image, and, according to Hodgson (2011), the ability to do this well:

> '… requires co-presence and a dextrous handling of a complex set of communication
> skills, social synchronicity skills, nuanced understanding of authority and the
> subverting of routines. "Having a laff" in all its nuances can only be learnt from others;
> it is not formally taught in lessons.' (p43)

In a school context, 'having a laff' is seen as a means of winning space from the school and its rules.

> 'The "laff" is a multi-faceted implement of extraordinary importance in the counter-school culture. … the ability to produce it is one of the defining characteristics of being one of "the lads" … But it is also used in many other contexts: to defeat boredom and fear, to overcome hardship and problems – as a way out of almost anything. In many respects, "the laff" is the privileged instrument of the informal as the command is of the formal.' (Willis 2011, p236)

Resistance to learning is normal, according to Brookfield (2006), who also says that teachers will deal with it more constructively if they accept that principle and the right of the student to resist. But this can be difficult for teachers to accept when their mission is to teach. Control mechanisms such as surveillance/inspections, performance indicators, performance-related pay and capability procedures dismiss the right of the student to resist. The classroom is a site of struggles, and '[t]eaching is the educational equivalent of white-water rafting. Periods of calm are interspersed with sudden frenetic turbulence' (ibid., p2) that are brought about by relationship issues between students and sometimes with staff (students dislike the teacher), inadequate images of the self, or when students are 'bored' or cannot understand the work. This maelstrom creates feelings and emotions that forge a particular ethos or culture in the classroom, which can either help or hinder effective learning and progress.

According to Feinstein (2004),

> 'Teenagers only seem irresponsible and unreasonable when they are compared to people older and younger. But viewed against the backdrop of the profound and rapid neurological and biological changes that are happening in their bodies, their behaviour is so much more understandable and logical.' (p14)

Behavioural neuroscientist Spear (2000) determined that 'daring', 'risk-taking' and 'novelty seeking' are common in young people and may be the result of developmental changes in the brain rather than hormonal. Commenting on social interactions and affiliations, Spear (2000) noted that adolescents talk to their peers almost four times more than to adults and that peer interaction:

'… may help develop social skills away from the home environment … helping to ease the transition toward independence from the family. Such interactions may also in some cases facilitate antisocial behaviours including cheating, stealing, trespassing and minor property destruction) peaking in the early- to mid- adolescence.' (p420)

Peer pressure therefore has a significant influence on young people, their social development and the way they behave, including taking risks. Spear (2000) stated that teenagers as a distinct group '… exhibit a disproportionate amount of reckless behaviour, sensation seeking and risk taking' (p421) than any other groups of individuals. Their propensity for seeking high levels of novelty and sensation stimulation is often linked to drug and alcohol use, which also increases during adolescence. Risk and danger trigger the release of dopamine (a chemical neurotransmitter with similar effects to cocaine), which produces a 'feel-good' sensation, and the attraction to novelty contributes to recklessness. Whereas teachers tend to view novelty in terms of brightening up the classroom, young people look for it everywhere, and '[w]hen life seems too predictable, wild excitement can seem like a perfectly reasonable pursuit' (Feinstein 2004, p127).

In summary, people are subject to the influences of social class although the classification can change with increased capitals. Culture is multifaceted: it is linked to social class through family and heritage, friendship groups, school and other organisational experiences and neighbourhoods/communities – in short, in whatever social circles people participate in either formally or informally, directly (as in human contact) or informally (as in on the fringes of direct human contact or technologically). The literature review clearly illustrates that there are significant inequalities in society that policymakers and researchers are exposing and attempting to rebalance in part, through the educational system. It is ironic that girls overall do better than boys at school but are disadvantaged on entry into the labour market, and this signals a considerable waste of human resources. Youth is a gendered issue, and there are differences in the ways in which boys

and girls approach learning and the ways in which they construct a sense of belonging through their own identity formation strategies and experiences. Resistance to learning is normal and challenging but can be deeply distressing. Understanding the experiences of children in a resistant learning culture is problematic because of the inequalities and the interplay of formal and informal power hierarchies in the classroom.

The next chapter will focus on the research methodology used to address the research questions.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

The purpose and development of research per se is a huge topic in its own right. Therefore, in this chapter, I have restricted the focus to those areas that relate directly to this study, that is: whereby research is a systematic process (that is not strictly scientific) used to understand the thoughts, experiences and behaviours of a select group of young people and encourage reflection in an organisational culture of evidence-based strategies for progress or improvement. This places the research in the naturalistic domain exploring characteristics, causes and consequences (Lofland 1971) and taking into account the environment, relationships, histories and behaviours (Baker 1994).   There were three potential methodologies that suited this particular purpose: ethnography, action research and the case study. I eliminated the action research approach on the basis that the purpose of this study was not about changing practice. This then resulted in a dilemma between an ethnographic approach or a case study.

My epistemological approach to this project was to explore Bourdieu's concepts of structure and agency, as I was curious about how policy frameworks that were supposed to bring equality did not manage to achieve that, and what the impact was on and for the students I worked with on a daily basis. Bourdieu does not overly dwell on the acts of resistance as such – acts of resistance are a natural consequence of making choices; neither did he reject the idea of power, he saw this as the most important field where the struggle for symbolic and material resources were played out and dominant people quelled resistance. I wanted to create a holistic approach to gathering and analysing the information that I had access to in my professional role blending both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The quantitative data did not produce *meaning* consequently, I did not pursue the project in the positivist tradition but used the quantitative data to provide context and confirm qualitative data.

As an interpretivist researcher, I am concerned with the students as individuals, understanding their perspectives of their educational experiences in particular and the meanings associated with their behaviours. This style of research has a wide variety of approaches and produces a multitude of rich, complex images of human behaviour, which may also be problematic in terms of validity. The students make their own valid meaning of events and experiences, but the views of others are also important in

terms of establishing multiple new points or 'truths'. In this respect, relevant data is more than what each young person had to say, and also consists of what other young people, their teachers and representatives of other professional agencies might evidence.

In order to explore how the young people involved in this project came to be placed in a PRU and what they felt about their personal educational experiences, I posed the following research questions:

- How is the educational progression of students explained, monitored, tracked and used in the PRU setting?
- What critical external and environmental factors impact on achievement, attainment and behaviour?
- What do students have to say about their experiences of education?

The first research question requires an explanation of achievement, attainment and progress, which was covered in Chapter 1 (p23). However, gathering information in relation to performance takes the study into 'quantitative' or numerical realms that emanate from the positivist tradition. It is often used in large-scale studies such as national benchmarking (GCSEs, SATs), and smaller studies such as this can use the national data for comparative purposes on which to base interpretivist analysis which takes account of other 'qualitative' critical influential factors from the environment and background experiences that the focus of the second research question attempts to address. The qualitative data was gathered from researcher-participant-observer activities over a three-year period (2009–2012) and interviews with staff. The situated position of myself as Head Teacher/researcher presented an additional opportunity to access data from other internal and external sources as part of my formal role and responsibilities, and that also led to ethical dilemmas. The perceptions of behaviour of the staff and students within the PRU at that time were also examined for discernable links with the key concepts identified. The final question relied predominantly on what students said of their individual experiences, but how their perceptions were collected presented choices and dilemmas.

In this chapter, I will set out the rationale for the chosen research methodology, paying particular attention to capturing the 'voice' of participants and the associated pitfalls of doing this, and the issues of validity.

Having been influenced by Bourdieu (1984; 1990), Skeggs (1997; 2004) and Willis (1997), I was initially attracted to using an ethnographic approach and explored Carspeken and Apple's (1992) five-stage model of critical research. However, through careful reflection about the purpose and processes of the research as it applies to this particular project – with its own complex and situated behaviours (Cohen et al. 2008) – I concluded that a case-study approach was more appropriate, and I will explain why as the chapter unfolds. But first I set out the main characteristics of both potential methodologies and then provide a brief autobiography to set a context for my involvement in the enterprise.

Characteristics of ethnographic research

Ethnography is broadly characterised by description, analysis and interpretation of evidence gathered through observation and interview techniques over time. Within this broad category are different methodologies that include critical ethnography, which is an approach aligned to post-enlightenment philosophical traditions such as situated research, in order to explore how knowledge is shaped by human agents and communities such as those in the PRU. Critical ethnography adopts a complex theoretical orientation towards culture and explicitly assumes that culture is positioned unequally in power relations. I considered this methodology because it enabled a focus on the differences between the staff's and the students' cultural positions and the power relations therein. Additionally, critical ethnography acknowledges the influences of others on the process as always being partial and partisan, and incorporates a fusion of interpretivist approaches which, according to Anderson (1989), frees '… individuals from sources of domination and repression' (p249), liberating people through increasing their knowledge, skills and understanding so that they make better life decisions (Apple in Lather 1991). Yet in schools and the PRU, 'freeing' individuals occurs through acts of domination and repression (Friere 1987, 1998; Apple in Lather 1991) and through the imposition of organisational structures, specified curricula and codes of behaviour in a legitimised, power-oriented hierarchy, which effectively 'colonises' young people through their formative years (Quinn 2010). Apple (Lather, 1991) says that it is necessary to '… analyze how research and researchers function in relations of unequal power' (p ix), adding:

'We must shift the role of critical intellectuals *from* being universalizing spokespersons to acting as cultural workers whose task it is to take away the barriers that prevent people for speaking for themselves … .' *(*ibid., p ix)

I was interested in the idea of research giving a voice to the participants, and this encouraged further exploration of the discourse of 'voice'. Harvey (1990) believed that knowledge and values are interrelated and interdependent on each other. The social values of individuals are influenced by their habitus and the values of society and, as such, the researcher should aim to go beyond the surface. In this way knowledge is validated and built upon as a dynamic process: '[e]ssentially, critical social research asks substantive questions about existent social processes' (ibid., p5).

The philosophy of a critical ethnographic approach resonated with the research purpose and the issues of inequality that some PRU learners had experienced. The PRU had an important role to play in empowering students to overcome barriers to learning and progress; within this process there were many power struggles and conflicts, particularly between the young and adults. The recorded reasons for placing students at the PRU fell primarily into three categories: an assault on another pupil; an assault on an adult; or threatening behaviour towards an adult or another pupil. An assault on another pupil was the most frequent reason and indicated power struggles (bullying) between pupils, but the combination of all forms of assaults towards adults presented a significantly higher frequency and showed a much stronger power conflict around resistance and the management of students.

I was initially concerned about the place of dialogical evidence because it diverted from the naturalistic approach in that participants were asked to *reflect* as a basis for discussion rather than only concentrating on the 'here and now' descriptions; the inclusion of this deviation was reassuring because I wanted students to reflect on prior experiences in order to understand why they came to be at the PRU and what was important to them. This exploration of the students' psychological development in the context of a particular social field chimed with the approaches of Hollway and Jefferson (2000), who also advocated similar validity checks, which then added further credence to the approach for me.

However, critical research is not without opposition. Hammersley (2009) argued that the subjectivity of human judgement flaws research outcomes:

'… social scientists, … have no distinctive expertise to determine what is good or bad about the situations they seek to describe or explain; or what if anything should be done about them. This is because even where value judgements rely on research evidence they also necessarily depend on other factual assumptions *and upon value principles that are plural and often in conflict.*' (p7)

In social research, validity is a recognised problem (Hammersley 2009) where factual evidence and value principles merge. This was a concern within this enterprise because there was potential for the behaviours and responses of participants to alter under scrutiny. This led me to explore the methodology of Carspeken and Apple (1992) and Carspeken (1996), shown as Appendix A and used in the pilot. The process proved valuable in setting out a disciplined approach and also in identifying validity checks at every stage of the process. This methodology was influential in the final approach adopted for the research.

My job required me to gather and analyse quantitative data, which I drew from to profile the student roll between 2009 and 2012. This data (assessments, attendance levels, exclusion data and involvement with other agencies), formed part of the students' histories, but this did not sit so well with the ethnographic approach. This sort of information was not so easily available in Willis's study, but with the advances in technology and more stored data on students, it is a feature of current school leadership that I wanted to utilise, in terms of matching participant accounts with these aspects of their recorded histories for accuracy. In addition, the PRU is a unique setting, and at the time of this study there was no standardised approach to the organisation of PRUs nationally. They come in many shapes and forms depending on the particular needs of local authorities – if, indeed, they choose to run them. Comparison with other PRUs was therefore difficult, although there was some national data available (DCFS 2008); but as noted in Chapter 1, this was politicised information and consequently generalisation was restricted. In this respect, the enterprise began to take on the form of a case study, which I shall explain next.

Characteristics of a case study

The key thing about case-study methodology is its situated uniqueness. It enables the researcher to capture the intricacies and situatedness of human behaviour in a single, bounded, dynamic 'field' such as the PRU, representing 'reality' as the researcher, staff and students interpret it. The case-study approach does not specify any particular ways of capturing or analysing data but ' … seeks holistic description and explanation' (Merriam 1988, p10). Case studies can be framed around ethnographic research as well as historical, psychological and sociological domains (Cohen et al. 2008), and can have either a narrow or a wide focus. Robson (2002) argued that case studies are well suited to 'extreme' situations, and as the behaviour of PRU students can fall into that category (verbal or physical violence resulting in exclusion), the case-study method would be a good vehicle for expression. Merriam (1988) determined that case studies must satisfy four essential characteristics: *particularistic* (focusing on particular situations, such as the PRU as a field and the students as players); *descriptive* (describing in detail the focus of the study, which is the behaviour and 'voice' of the PRU students as real people); *heuristic* (bringing fresh insights and discovery to the researcher and reader, which is the primary aim of this enterprise); and *inductive* (drawing meaning from multiple data sources which are grounded in the context itself and can include qualitative and quantitative data). Case studies provide a real sense of what life is like for the participants but expressed by an insider/outsider – the researcher – and in reporting events, the researcher has already selected in or out which bits (in their view) are significant, relevant or important, and this also produces bias (Dyer 1995).

According to Cohen et al. (2008), 'Whatever the problem or the approach, at the heart of every case study lies a method of observation' (p258), and there are two forms of observation: participant observation and non-participant observation. 'Participant observers' are generally involved in the activities they observe, such as in this case whereby the observer was also the Head Teacher. In my routine day-to-day activities, I was well placed to observe the students by being part of the lesson in a formal capacity (teaching or being present in response to positive/negative behaviours) or an informal capacity ('breezing' through a classroom, chatting at breaks – some students liked to come into my office, sit at my table and chat to me and their peers). Non-participant observations are detached from the group, and these would occur when I was monitoring teaching and learning as part of my leadership monitoring functions, auditing classroom

behaviours or observing unnoticed from a distance as the students interacted with each other and staff. Both approaches produced information about the responses of students to teaching and learning, but the participant/observer functions enabled richer, 'thicker' data because of the exchanges taking place between the participants and the researcher. For the purpose of the research I adopted 'insider' observations to accommodate both aspects.

Just as there are multiple approaches to conducting case-study research, there are multiple approaches to writing up and presenting the outcomes of the research. There are two established principles for writing up a case study: 'fitness for purpose' and 'fitness for audience' (Cohen et al. 2008, p262). Robson (2002) identified six potential structures: *suspense* (starting with an executive summary which is then expanded with argument, leading to conclusions); *narrative* (which is characterised by an account or report setting out the evidence, issues analysis and a conclusion); *comparative* (whereby the research focus is explored from different approaches, providing either a 'thick' holistic interpretation for the reader or enabling the reader to make evaluations about which approach explains the data best); *chronological* (similar to the narrative approach in that it tells a story but attempts to explain cause and effect en route); *theory-generating* (in which the researcher links the case to selected theoretical constructs in order to confirm or form a new theory); and *unsequenced* (in which the chronology, presenting issues or events, are unimportant and the research is subject to the researcher's impulsivity and selection biases). Willis's study (1977) was different as it was presented in two sections: data and interpretation. My research will present data from quantitative and qualitative sources, and the qualitative sources will include personal observations and accounts from staff and students. This indicates a comparative form at this stage.

The research design

Having considered both methodologies, I determined that a case study using material practices which '… turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self' (Denzin and Lincoln 2003, p3) was the way forward. This approach would enable me to use various tools in a non-standard format, such as observations, reflections,

discussions and interviews, and recorded data from my own monological records and from the already stored data (student files, school and LA records and other agency information).   The study was not intended to cause a planned change in practice but there was potential for change at a personal and institutional level. This was a side effect rather than a planned outcome.

I decided to draw data from field notes which recorded my observations of events, behaviour and relationships in the PRU from interviews with students and staff and from interrogating the available recorded data that I had access to.   Because the data gathering was longitudinal, I had less concern over the Hawthorn effect for my informal observations, but was aware of it in more formal, non-participant observations when I adopted an inspection role for monitoring purposes. Therefore, observations over time would expose when particular efforts or behaviours were exaggerated. I anticipated that some difficulties may arise as a consequence of students' immaturity, lack of experience and therefore wisdom; some students may distort what happened in order to elevate their own sense of self-worth or to compete with others for the same reason; some may attempt to say what they think the researcher wanted to hear rather than express their own feelings and views. I was aware of my own potential for bias in that some aspects of negative behaviour could be ignored, such as that of the likeable rogue where there was a risk that I might inadvertently misrepresent or ignore certain aspects of behaviour; in other situations, the students are so well known that some traits are overlooked. Therefore, probing the obvious to go beneath the surface is part of the research function and, according to Giddens (2008), 'Quite often, if we properly understand how others live, we also acquire a better understanding of what their problems are' (p.26). In addition to these potential pitfalls, Nisbet and Watt (1984) warn of the dangerous styles of reporting case studies that distort the case study itself.

At this point, a brief autobiography follows that contextualises the role of situated researcher.

About the researcher

I began teaching in 1972 in a comprehensive school newly formed from the merger of two co-located single-sex grammar schools. I progressed through middle management to senior leadership, changing

schools in the process and having a strong affinity for pastoral matters, particularly in terms of curriculum access and pupil behaviour. Therefore, in the context of this research, my background and professional focus provided considerable opportunity to connect with disengaged young people over a long period of time, shaping my personal knowledge, skills and understanding as a consequence. My 'on the ground' experiences were enhanced through further study, linking theory and practice in the form of a Master of Philosophy action research degree, which I completed in 1992. During this period, I was enthusiastically involved in developing pastoral teams through in-service training activities to deliver PSHE throughout the school (Hailey 1990). A key theme of this work concerned increasing the safety and resiliency of pupils and also encouraging them to talk about their experiences and feelings or express their views and emotions in non-confrontational ways. On reflection, whilst a great deal of focus was placed on developing assertive pupils, little was done to prepare staff for the creative ways in which their pupils would use this new skill in the classroom, playground or corridor in their relationships with staff and other pupils. It is also interesting to note that the pupils of that time are now the parents of pupils/students who feature in this research, and the following comes to mind: 'as you sow, so shall you reap'!

When Ofsted was formed, I became an inspector as well as a senior school leader, and I used that experience to prepare the schools I worked in for inspection. This was an important step in my professional development and a significant precursor to my move into the SEN sector, initially as a general teacher of Key Stages 3 and 4 students who had been excluded from mainstream school. Teaching was delivered in a small community centre; resources were scarce and relied primarily on the resourcefulness of the teacher. I became Centre Manager and later Head of Special Education Support Service, managing all centres from Key Stages 1 to 4. The students were designated 'excluded' or 'medical'; some were school-age mothers or pregnant. I also managed home tuition, hospital education, the Early Years specialist intervention teacher and later the Children in Care specialist teachers.   Through this role, I worked closely with learners regarded as resistant, vulnerable and sometimes difficult to manage.   In this role, my personal challenge was to 'level the playing field' or, more specifically, ensure that when the students left the PRU they were not disadvantaged in the job market by their placement at the PRU. They had to have the opportunities to leave with qualifications that would enable them to access further education or work. The challenge was not about compliance but about acquiring skills for survival in the 'real world'.

From March 2006 to May 2008, I was seconded to the local Youth Offending Service (YOS) as Youth Crime Prevention Manager. During that time, I became aware that many of the pupils and students in the PRUs were also engaging with, or were known to, the police and YOS through criminal and antisocial activities and I became curious as to why. This particular career opportunity provided the impetus for this research, and a year after returning to my substantive post I became the Head Teacher of the Key Stage 4 PRU and began working towards this project. Through the discipline of study, I began to realise that I was more interested in developing insights into *why* the PRU students made the choices they did and whether that insight could be used to improve outcomes for them. Through the taught elements of the doctorate programme, I 'discovered' Willis and was initially surprised by the striking similarities of 'the lads' and the resistant learners in the PRU during the research period. In over thirty years of some of the most dramatic events in the history of education, little seemed to have changed in the world of learning for these young people (Ainley and Allen 2010). Further reading introduced Skeggs and an understanding of feminist approaches to research. Both were inspired by Bourdieu, whose explanations of habitus, capital and field brought understanding to the conceptual and theoretical framework for the research. As all three social researchers adopted ethnographic approaches, it seemed to be the natural starting point for me, particularly as I was situated amongst the potential participants. This self-positioning brought opportunities that an external observer would not be party to, but it also brought particular challenges. In the following sections, I will consider the advantages and disadvantages of being a situated researcher and establish the ethical concerns and approaches to reducing bias before moving on to examine the methodological tools used to capture 'voice' and illustrate the impact of class, culture and resistance on student progress.

The situated position of researcher and associated ethical considerations

My background experiences in pastoral and curriculum innovation and behaviour management placed me in a strong position to conduct this research. Since attending to this task, I have learned so much more about the young people I worked with and also about myself and have come to the conclusion that we are

never 'the finished article' – learning is ongoing, and any future research I become involved in will be enhanced significantly because of the rigour, discipline and connection with theory that this and any subsequent research project brings. My background experiences gave me a good grounding, and my role of Head Teacher presented opportunities to access internal and external data sources with relative ease. I was also well aware that my professional position held responsibilities, authority and privilege that contributed to the ethical issues I faced. I was working with vulnerable and challenging youngsters of school age in a specialist setting, and safeguarding was paramount.

As the research involved gathering information about what children said and did, particular care was taken in preparing information, the questions and the process for gathering information. Children have rights, as identified in Chapter 1, and those rights, which include being able to speak for themselves and to be heard, are embedded in legal frameworks (BERA 2011). However, despite the ontological assumption that children have an equal worth to adults, in the field of education they are positioned in a hierarchical structure in which adults are in relatively powerful positions. Cohen reminds us that

> '… much educational research involves children who cannot be regarded as being on equal terms with the researcher and it is important to keep this is mind at all stages in the research process, including the point where informed consent is sought. … as a guiding principle ... while it is desirable to lessen the power differential between children and adult researchers, the difference will remain and its elimination will be ethically inadvisable.' (Cohen et al. 2008, p54)

It should also be remembered that gaining the consent of children and young people below the age of 16 involves parents too. In educational research, it is ethically better and more reliable if adults conduct research with children and young people rather than use children as researchers. Data-handling is also a site for ethical concern, and information provided by the participants should not reveal their identity and should not breach confidentiality. Data protection legislation exists to protect the interests and rights of individuals in society. However, when dealing with children and young people, researchers must not guarantee total confidentiality, because from a safeguarding perspective they cannot. Any adult has an

overriding responsibility to report any situation in which a child or young person is exposed to or involved in behaviour that is risky and/or detrimental to their health and well-being. Making this clear at the recruitment stage avoids 'betrayal', but potentially risks less forthrightness in responses or holding back. If a student disclosed under these circumstances, they did so knowing that action would be taken to secure their safety.

Conducting educational and social research is not only about finding out truths; it involves ethical issues around the rights and values of the subjects themselves and may surface from any number of sources as Cohen identifies,

> 'Ethical problems for researchers can multiply surprisingly when they move from the general to the particular, and from the abstract to the concrete. Ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data.' (Cohen 2008, p51)

The British Educational Research Association's (BERA 2011) guidelines for managing educational research (which will also be observed in this enterprise) state that any such research should be conducted

> '… within an ethic of respect for:
> - The Person
> - Knowledge
> - Democratic Values
> - The Quality of Educational Research
> - Academic Freedom.' (p4)

Before I could begin structuring any formal research activity with the PRU students and staff, certain approvals were necessary and they needed to be *informed* consents and voluntary – secured without duress, stress or pressure (BERA 2011). I had to secure approval from my work organisation to conduct the

research (see Appendix B), have permission from the students themselves and have their parents' consent to their participation (see Appendix C), and I also had to have approval from Keele University's Ethics Review Panel for the enterprise per se (see Appendix D). In order to obtain voluntary informed consent for participation, the recruitment processes had to be carefully thought through, including how to approach potential participants who might, because of my authority position, feel pressured to participate (Carspeken 1996); how much information to share and at what points in the process to share information so that choice would be informed; and how to frame the information so that the potential participants and parents of students understood what was being asked of them and why (see Appendix C). In addition to these ethical considerations there was also the very real possibility that as the research got under way, other unforeseen outcomes, such as staff changes or new students arriving, might produce additional ethical concerns ' … requiring on-going negotiation and resolution' (DeLaine 2002, p29).

Being in situ enabled the renegotiation of terms as matters arose – yet had I been an occasional visitor, changes that might have had an impact on the research could potentially have gone unannounced in between sessions, thus affecting the planning and delivery of the research schedule and subsequent activities. According to Walford (2001), this was likely to induce emotional and psychological stress in the researcher, and, potentially, feelings of inadequacy. This was a health warning for any prospective participant/observer researcher and meant that it was important to take account of and protect my own emotional health and well-being throughout the process because conducting the research was intellectually demanding.

Gaining consent, enabling the right to refuse, the recruitment of participants, deception and transparency, and managing unintended outcomes and disclosure which might lead to unforeseen ethical concerns all held the capacity for bias that could distort the research findings, and running throughout each aspect was the impact of power relations on potential and actual participants, which was directly linked to my hierarchical position of Head Teacher. In the PRU, attitudes were such that difficulties might be encountered if staff thought they were inadvertently contributing to the personal development of the researcher. Also, staff might have felt uncomfortable about what pupils could be saying about them and their teaching and also what I as researcher might ask the students, which could reflect on teacher practice

– thus creating a subversive, under-cover form of surveillance, which could produce a 'toxic' atmosphere permeating all aspects of work for everyone. Similarly, students might also be concerned about what they revealed to me and what I might do with that information. Disclosures could produce legal or safeguarding issues for which there were mandatory local authority protocols in place. Participants have a right to anonymity, and this was respected. Full names were not used, only first names (as requested by the participants, having first rejected the option to contribute under a pseudonym), initials or a unique reference (as in the data shown in the appendices). Any reference to location was also withheld and information was stored securely at all times.

As a situated researcher, my role was as an 'insider' participant/observer whilst my professional role was a senior manager and therefore carried disciplinary responsibilities. At times, these roles conflicted with one another over issues such as: managing relationships, access to information, gatekeeping information channels, preserving neutrality and protecting the interests of the young. The researcher role had to be balanced with the professional role, negotiated with staff and students and trusted. Transparency was an important issue for me, and how this was handled would determine how cooperative staff and students were likely to be. Yet, explaining the research in detail could overwhelm potential participants, or present possible 'demand cues' which could change responses and behaviour, thus distorting the outcomes. This dilemma has been a recurring problematic in sociological research. Deception may take the form of not telling people that they are being studied, resulting in a sense of being spied on, misinforming participants about the purpose and terms of the research, or exposing the participants to unnecessary stressful and possibly embarrassing situations (Cohen et al. 2008). Some researchers believe that the end justifies the means as long as no harm comes to the participants (Aronson et al. 1990; Kimmel 2011). Others argue that deception is acceptable if the outcomes are in the public's interest and that if it prevents bias from creeping in, whilst in some instances, it can protect the anonymity of some participants (Cohen et al. 2008). Christensen (1988) determined that whilst deception is unethical from a moral perspective, in some instances, participants enjoyed participating in the research because felt they were making a positive contribution and derived more learning from it consequently, they did not mind having their privacy thus invaded. This would indicate that the determinant is more to do with how high the stakes are and, as Skeggs (2004, p5) pointed out, '… in whose interests …' is the deception is committed:

The concerns about and subsequent debates on deception as a legitimate research tool resulted in the codification of ethical standards, such as the BERA (2011) guidelines already mentioned, and the formation of ethical review boards in most research-oriented institutions, '… so much so that it can be said that contemporary researchers are subjected to a higher level of professional ethical accountability…' (Kimmel 2011, p 581) than perhaps others charged with protecting human rights, such as lawyers, policymakers and the media, who actively use deception to further other agendas (Rosnow, 1997). Kimmel (2011) states, 'No deception is an admirable but unattainable goal' (p583) and also highlights the potential for unintentional deceptions, such as those arising '… from participant misunderstanding or absence of full disclosure …', which may be difficult to avoid in all reality and adds, 'Researchers are likely to vary in their judgements about what constitutes a "full" disclosure of pertinent information about an investigation …' (p583). Such judgements are in themselves subjective, and researchers quite often have to use their own professional judgement and personal values to steer them through their research. To help and guide researchers, codes of practice have been developed which also provide protection if followed resolutely. Codes of practice ensure that researchers understand their obligations to their subjects and the research community and also encourage reflection, which helps in the preparation and planning of research as much as engaging in the research itself in a responsible and disciplined way.

It is therefore apparent that with so many variables the potential for bias has to be addressed at all stages of the research. As reducing bias is such an important element in terms of the validity of the enterprise, I will explain that next.

Reducing bias

I have previously referred to validity in terms of the selected methodologies and concepts. By being mindful of the pitfalls in the planning, execution and writing up of the final account, validity was further enhanced. In this section, I acknowledge at a more practical level some of the techniques used to counter the effects of bias in order to increase reliability and secure the integrity of the enterprise. In this research, the areas

that were perhaps most at risk of bias were concerned with the recruitment of participants, sharing information about the research with them, gathering and processing dialogical evidence and the analysis of all data. In this study, a particular challenge was to reduce the impact of power relations on the discussion aspects of the study: '… the interview is not simply a data collection situation but a social and frequently political situation …' (Cohen et al. 2008, p 151). Carspeken (1996) advocated that researchers should concentrate on developing supportive and non-authoritarian relationships with participants and be sure that they were – and knew that they were – protected from any harmful outcomes that the research might produce. Developing a non-authoritarian relationship with staff and student participants was difficult to achieve as my Head Teacher role had disciplinary elements. Also, if I tempered my relationship with participants I might be seen to be favouring them, which could have had adverse effects in dealing with disciplinary matters in the 'day job'. This was evidence of role conflict.   A possible solution at the recruitment stage was to invite a third party to speak to the students on my behalf. To do this, I had to brief that person very carefully because the introduction of a third party created further potential for bias, and they had to be approachable and accurate in relation to the information they supplied on my behalf.

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) advise that in ethnographic research internal validity can be achieved by using low inference descriptors, more than one researcher or participant researchers, subjecting the data to examination by peers or using tools such as computers to record, store and retrieve data because they reproduce action consistently and accurately – provided the fields and functions are accurately set up in the first place. In addition, using already 'tried and tested' approaches such as the Carspeken and Apple (1992) model would increase reliability and validity. To counteract the negative effects of deception, Cohen et al. (2008) said that providing adequate feedback at the end of the session or study was the most accepted and effective method:

> 'Feedback must be kept inviolable and in no circumstances should subjects be given false feedback or be misled into thinking they are receiving feedback when the researcher is in fact introducing another experimental manipulation.' (p67)

Further, when feedback was given it also provided an opportunity for both researcher and participant to cross-check what was said with what was heard, thus validating the evidence from both perspectives and clearing up any misunderstandings. In interview situations, this was particularly useful because the personal characteristics of the researcher and participant and the 'substantive content of the questions' were further sources of bias, as were gender and age, ethnicity and social class (Cohen et al. 2008, p150). Some of these cannot be mitigated, but in the context of the PRU gender, age and class were evident as most of the 14- to 16-year-old students were male and 'precariat' and most of the staff (including the researcher) were female, middle class and middle aged.

Highly structured interviews increase reliability as any change to the script or the ways in which the interview is conducted can render the outcomes unreliable; but careful piloting of the interview schedule can enhance reliability (Silverman 1993). Silverman (Cohen et al., 2008) argued that open-ended interview questions enabled the participants to describe their reality, recognising that people may hear the same message but interpret it in different ways. In this situation, unexpected issues may arise which the researcher has to then deal with.

As an 'insider' researcher, observations featured in the evidence sources and the views of staff about the students. This was also subject to bias, particularly if I or the other participant observers were to get too attached to the student participants – this was another argument for maintaining the hierarchical distinctions, retaining professional distance and not becoming too familiar with students in the research process. To reduce bias in 'insider' observations, the triangulation of approaches and evidence is advised (Denzin 1970) whereby two or more methods of data collection are brought together to explain a behaviour or incident, incorporating quantitative and qualitative evidence, and this is a '… powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research' (Cohen et al. 2008, p141). Therefore, in order to reduce the impact of bias, multiple methods of data collection are recommended, particularly where human behaviour is the subject of the research and qualitative data is being processed. My research design incorporated a variety of overlapping and interlinking research tools within the main framework of my research (triangulation), and in this way I planned to reduce the potential for bias. Also, by running a

small pilot beforehand, I was able to identify the areas where bias existed and reduced its impact in the larger project that followed, and this will be reported on later in this chapter.

Having thus determined the methodological approach as a case study and acknowledged the potential areas for bias, I now turn to the instruments used to gather the data with which to respond to the research questions. These were a blend of qualitative and quantitative tools. The raw data for the quantitative investigations are shown in appendices G1–G5. This data includes information pertaining to attainment, attendance, exclusions and deprivation, which were shown in the preceding chapters to be indicators of class distinction. This information is historical, and is collected from the stored records of the PRU, schools, the local authority and external agencies. Collectively, it presents a picture or profile of the group of students who attend the PRU between 2009 and 2012, and has been used in various reports to the management committee, local authority line managers and Ofsted inspectors to apprise them of the issues and successes of the students at the PRU. As such, it is also validated data, which I explored for patterns and trends which link to the research questions. The final question required tools that enabled students to speak for themselves about their personal perspectives on and experiences of education, relationships and behaviour, from which I interpreted meaning in terms of the conceptual framework identified for this study. In the following section, I consider the ways in which 'voice' is captured and identify the tools used for this purpose.

Capturing voice: ways and means

When capturing voice it is important to realise that we should not assume or expect young people to freely tell their stories simply because others in more powerful positions request them to (Quinn 2010). Nonetheless, there are good reasons as to why adults should encourage young people to tell their stories and why adults must listen to children and young people and the legal reasons (enshrined in the Children's Acts 1989 and 2004) and human rights reasons (protected in the UNCRC Article 12) have already been referred to earlier. In addition, the moral argument is encapsulated in the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda, and a further reason is to develop more skilful and effective professionals in children's services so that professional interventions are more effective. Schools have developed various ways to do this, which

include: school councils and forums, pastoral systems, emotional literacy development programmes such as SEAL and PSHE units, circle time and 'worry boxes' (Children's Commissioner 2012), which work well in those schools that invest in these structures. However, these structures are rarely representative of the whole school pupil population, and Archer et al. (2010) identified that excluded students or those at risk of exclusion rarely participate in these activities but possibly hold the key as to why education is not working for them. Consequently, researchers (BERA 2013; Brownlie 2010; Archer et al. 2010; Dillabough and Kennelly 2010; Wright et al. 2010; Nayak 2003) have targeted these students and identified that many who disengage felt that current schooling did not meet their needs or aspirations and that they were expected to fit into the mainstream model rather than schools adapting to them. Some regarded school failure as a consequence of their own negativity whilst others felt that the conditions and demands of being at school were unreasonable. They did not like long periods of inactivity or lengthy explanations of what to do and writing, nor did they like teachers shouting at them or attempting to explain in ways they did not understand. They (students) favoured more practical and active approaches to learning. Therefore, although school systems may not be overly successful in reaching out to disengaged students, other agencies have managed to conduct research that has gathered the views of young people about their perspectives of school, and the issue would seem to relate to listening. The Study of Serious Case Reviews (DfE 2012c) identified that when children spoke up they were not always listened to; if this is evident at this level then it is likely to occur more frequently at lower levels of need too. Therefore, we have a cultural situation in which children are encouraged to speak but then are not necessarily listened to. This does not encourage children to speak out about their concerns and feelings and their perspectives on their lived lives.

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are important elements of language, and how effectively one has command of the various components indicates a classed position, as indicated in the previous chapter. Language development and literacy acquisition are priority areas for improvement amongst the students at the KS4 PRU. Many had depressed basic skills (literacy, numeracy and relationships) that could be attributed to early disengagement or learning difficulties, resulting in disadvantage, exploitation and further social and academic exclusion. Language in all its forms is used to instruct, impart knowledge, assess

learning, share thoughts and feelings and transmit and shape values – and to control. The way language is acquired and used is important as Willis illustrates:

> 'Bourdieu and Paseron argue that it is the exclusive "cultural capital" – knowledge and skills in the symbolic manipulation of language and figures – of the dominant groups in society which ensures the success of their offspring and thus the reproduction of class position and privilege. This is because educational advancement is controlled through the 'fair' meritocratic testing of precisely those skills which "cultural capital" provides.' (Willis 1977, p128)

Words are like weapons, and can hurt and destroy confidence: '… did there not cross your mind some thought of the physical power of words? Is not every word an impulse on the air?' (Edgar Allen Poe, 1850). In the educational and social research arena, language states the relationship between humans and our environment, and the ability to articulate that relationship also sets the scientist apart from the layperson. Language gives us a framework to express thought, and thought is the basis of understanding; consequently, it was important to consider language in the selection of tools chosen to capture the voice of vulnerable children and young people who did not have the same level of language. This impacted on how information about the research was presented and the choice of research tools used.

From previous experiences of talking to teenagers, such as during informal discussions in and around the PRU and through the pilot, I found that they were often overwhelmed if given a 'blank canvas' to talk about themselves and that they functioned better if they had a framework. Designing questions that would enable students to recount their life stories was a key task, and there were ethical considerations too. According to Hollway and Jefferson (2000), any form of structured/semi-structured interview falls within a question-and-answer style in which the researcher sets the agenda and retains control of what is said. In contrast, the narrative approach means the agenda is open, enabling the subject or participant to take control of the direction of the exchange and what was said, and the responsibility for making the story clear to the listener lies with the narrator.   Polkinghorne (1988) described narrative as '… the primary form by

which human experience is made meaningful … it organises human experience into temporally meaningful episodes' (p1). However, narratives are reliant on the accuracy of the memories and the motives of the subject in recalling the memories, and therefore truth is in question, which Hollway and Jefferson (2000) refer to as the 'relation of word to world' (p32). I started out wanting to achieve a narrative structure because I wanted the raw reflections of the subjects on key events, but because I was shaping and retaining control of the agenda I did not achieve this. I had moments of narrative within structured discussions; the follow-up meetings enabled me to check what was said for factual accuracy and gave further opportunity to explore issues I felt unclear about. The follow-up meeting also provided the participant with an opportunity to offer further information or 'colour' to their previous account. It was this that made the process *dialogical*.

A truly narrative approach whereby students had complete control of the agenda could easily have led to disclosures that would have had to be referred to the LA's Safeguarding Team. The dilemma was: do I create an opportunity for this to happen and then possibly have to manage a major safeguarding issue; or do I focus on my core task as researcher and on the research agenda. Clearly, even in the role of researcher, any disclosures would have to be acted on in accordance with the established procedures. Consequently, in my preparations with students and their parents, I made it explicit that any disclosures of a safeguarding or illegal nature would be referred to the appropriate agencies and protocols would be followed. I also decided that the interviews needed a clear focus through structured and semi-structured questions that would allow for some narrative responses. Carspeken (1996) suggested a number of validity checks, which included checking for consistency in recorded interviews, checking back with participants that what was recorded was what they meant to say and matching observations with what participants described. Using various methods to cross-check information increases the validity of the outcomes and, in Lather's (1991) terms, creates catalytic validity.

The time during which I could observe and engage with students was limited to their attendance at the PRU, and this meant that I was only observing a small part of their lived experiences. To extend the field, I considered other options that would record their behaviour and focus of attention, such as video and photography. Videoing would provide a 'fly on the wall' observation if students agreed to it, but would be

very time intensive and potentially very intrusive because, as a documentary, it would involve following them into their homes and neighbourhoods, which I had neither the time nor the inclination for. I decided on photography as an approach because it gave the students control over what they captured, they could take photos when it suited them and that also meant they could take photos at home and in their neighbourhood. Schratz and Steiner-Loffler (1998) explored the method of students using photographs to capture their sense of reality about what their school represented to them. Photography enables images to be viewed from different perspectives, and the camera is a powerful instrument with which to freeze some of the different views and opinions. Bourdieu (1984) was also interested in photography, which he said exposed variations between the richest and poorest in social and economic capital, by their distinctive *tastes* or what the subject was that they had chosen to photograph:

'Factorial analysis of judgement on "photogenic" objects reveals an opposition within each class between the fractions richest in cultural capital and poorest in economical capital and the fractions richest in economical capital and poorest in cultural capital.'

(p31)

How the images were represented and read was open to interpretation but was influenced by the level of social or cultural capital that the reader had and was therefore subject to bias.   However, the camera can '… present reality almost as the eye sees, only slightly narrower than a normal view' (Harper 2003, p258), which enables the reader to interpret and validate the evidence for themselves on the congruity between what was said and reported elsewhere.

Triangulation and quantitative data

I could not assume that students would be any more aware of their 'class' or understand the nuances of it than they would be of their academic achievements, attendance levels or reasons for their exclusion. That is not to say they would not have a view, but that view could potentially be wildly different from the recorded evidence. It was fairly safe to assume that between the ages of 14 and 16 they would be aware of some inequalities, such as economic differences between them and others and in the way they perceived

they had been treated. The use of quantitative data enabled triangulation by the cross-checking of verbal accounts with recorded evidence, and it also provided an introduction for discussions about behaviour and performance.

It would have been unfair to assume that the students came from disadvantaged backgrounds just because they were excluded or at risk of exclusion on the basis of the research that identifies this to be the trend. It needed to be a proven fact, and to achieve this I looked at the take-up for free school meals (FSM) and the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) for England. To access FSM, students' families need to apply if they are in receipt of certain state benefits. This system does not guarantee that all children and young people who are eligible actually take up the provision, as sometimes students do not want to be identified in this way or the families are unaware that they meet the criteria, but for those that do take advantage of the system it indicates a level of economic deprivation. The IMD is a database that draws information from a variety of deprivation domains that includes: income, employment, health and disability, education, crime, housing, neighbourhoods and access to services. The indices are linked to postcodes and are used to identify and analyse patterns and trends in order to target resources and interventions. Again, it is not foolproof, because pockets of affluence can exist in areas that are seen from this tool to be disadvantaged and pockets of deprivation can exist in broadly affluent areas. However, again it does provide a benchmark for comparison with other sources of information that students may choose to reveal about themselves later.

Attainment data from the Key Stage Standardised Assessment Tests was used to indicate how much progress students made between the key stages and when their disengagement with learning began. Again, I could not assume that students would know this information, so I chose to interrogate it for signs of regression in learning linked to exclusion and involvement with other agencies, which then gave a perspective on how behaviour was changing and provided a platform for further discussion.

Having determined the approach that would involve gathering quantitative data from records and qualitative data from people, it was time to test out the proposed methodology before undertaking the full research. The next section will provide an overview of the pilot study and the lessons learnt in the process.

The pilot and lessons learnt

Pilot studies are small-scale preliminary studies used as a precursor to the fuller study that follows. They allow the researcher to check the feasibility of the research and to test out the selected methodology for gathering and interpreting data in order to improve the design of it. They can also give advance warning as to where the main project might fail, where research protocols may not be followed or whether the proposed methods are inappropriate or too complicated. In addition, they can help the researcher assess the levels of their own skills and highlight additional requirements in order to complete the research effectively.

There were issues relating to the timing of the pilot study, such as timetabling, timescales and gathering evidence over time. Circumstances placed the timing of the pilot in the summer term, and this was a relatively small window of time that included the added pressure of exams. I had to be mindful of revision, exams and the traditional 'block release' arrangements whereby students only attended for exams. This reduced flexibility and impacted on my arrangements. Also, I had limited reflective evidence simply because of the stage I was at. Circumstances also dictated that the pilot had to be conducted at the same facility as the fuller study, which meant that there was an element of preparation for students and staff as I tested out the tools to be used. I began by sharing my intentions with staff at a staff meeting, taking particular care to let them know the purpose and focus of the research and what sort of questions I would be putting to the students, as I did not want the staff to feel threatened by what I proposed to ask the students. I explained that at some point I would invite staff to consent to voluntary participation and that they could refuse to participate or withdraw consent at any point in the process. On reflection, I realised I was also giving cues about the value I placed on the enterprise because I wanted staff to cooperate with me and I did not want to deceive them. I was quite possibly using my authority to gain cooperation – the manipulative aspects of leadership – although I did not see it as such at the time. I was able to restrict the pilot to an outgoing year group so that the fuller study had 'fresh' student participants. As staff turnover was more stable than that of students, I approached members of staff who had recently retired and returned ad hoc to provide supply cover to test out staff questions.

I interrogated the available data on attainment and progress; attendance and exclusion; prior schools; brushes with the police and youth crime; poverty indicators of FSM and the IMD to build up a profile of the PRU cohort for 2009/10, and brought the analysis back to staff for discussion. This resulted in a realisation that clear working definitions of 'vulnerable', 'challenging' and 'difficult' were absent at the time, and as it was commonplace to refer to the PRU students in this generalised way, I thought it appropriate to arrive at a clear understanding of these labels with staff. To do this, I interrogated the taken-for-granted concepts used by the main agencies in the local Children's Services, as shown in Fig. 6, and then shaped them into working definitions which were presented to staff for their comments. In order to increase validity, a social services service manager, a police officer and a YOS manager audited these definitions.

Through debate and discussion, the following definitions were arrived at for use within the PRU and with our outside agencies (i.e. police, social care, children's services):

'Vulnerable' students are those who might be considered to be *those most at risk of a failure to thrive emotionally, socially, physically and academically, and/or those most at risk of adopting lifestyles that will lead to ill-health; conflict with authority; engagement with crime and disorder; and a dependency on the state for survival.*

'Challenging' students are those who might be considered to be *those who are hard to reach; refuse to engage with services; and are non-conformist. Further, they will present behaviours that may be described as 'acting out' (i.e. violent; persistently disruptive; loud and aggressive; confrontational); 'passive resistant' (i.e. selective attendance; agreeing but not doing; quiet non-compliance)' 'risky behaviour' (i.e. behaviour that will put them at risk of harm to themselves or others).*

'Difficult' was another socially constructed term to explain students with *school disaffection and who often resisted attempts to engage with learning and staff.*

A further development was to apply the definitions to the PRU students to determine the level of vulnerability and challenge they presented, and to do this I devised a matrix and scoring system (Figs. 7 & 8) that was presented to staff during a staff meeting on behaviour issues.

Lead agencies	Indicators of vulnerability	Indicators of challenging
Education	Low/depressed basic skills (literacy, numeracy, communication) Poor attendance Little or no progress Regression Free school meals CAF/TAC involvement (multi-agency) SEN Children in Care (CiC)	Non-attendance Truancy Persistent disruptive behaviour Non-compliance Verbally/physically aggressive
Youth Offending/Crime (YOS, Police, Probation Services)	Poverty Neighbourhood Dysfunctional family – volatile relationships; domestic abuse Family members and friends involved in offending Involved in antisocial behaviour (ASBO/CrASBO) Persistent and prolific offending Out of school At risk of harm to self and/or others	No remorse or desire to change Non-compliance Verbally/physically aggressive Escalation of criminal activities: frequency and type
Health	Obesity Drugs: misuse/abuse Alcohol: misuse/abuse Mental health issues Physical health compromised – subject to infection and disease Disability Teenage pregnancy Environmental factors make positive change difficult to achieve Unexplained injuries	Unwilling to change lifestyle – prevailing attitudes and poor motivation Hard to reach Non-compliance Verbally/physically aggressive
Social Care	Victims, witnesses and perpetrators of domestic abuse Family breakdown Poverty Housing – lack of, poorly maintained CAF/TAC involvement (multi-agency) Sexual exploitation	Refuse to engage with services High dependency on benefit system Non-compliance Verbally/physically aggressive Chaotic, disorganised family life – lack of boundaries

Fig. 6   Indicators of 'vulnerable' and 'challenging' as used by lead agencies

RAG										
TOTAL										
CHALLENGING		Risky behaviour								
		Passive resistance								
		Acting out								
		Refusing to engage								
VULNERABILITY	Social Care	Family breakdown								
		Poverty								
		Housing								
	Health	Teen pregnancy								
		Sexual exploitation								
		Alcohol								
		Drugs								
		Disability								
		DV								
		Mental								
		Physical								
	Youth Crime	YISP								
		ASB/ASBO								
		YOS/YRO								
	Education	Attendance								
		Progress								
	Student									

Fig. 7   Matrix of vulnerability and challenge – PRU cohort

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│ Matrix scoring system                                                         │
│                                                                               │
│ Score 0 - >3 points              Red /Amber /Green rating                     │
│                                                                               │
│ 0 = No evidence                  Leave blank                                  │
│ 1 = Slight concern               Green                                        │
│ 2 = Some concern                 Amber                                        │
│ 3 = Significant concern          Red                                          │
│                                                                               │
│                                                                               │
│ '3' in any one area:       Further assessment and signposting to a 'lead' agency for targeted │
│                            intervention, resulting in a behaviour/personalised learning plan. │
│ '3' in multiple areas:     Further checks for multi-agency responses and links over possible joint │
│                             intervention plans.                               │
│ '2' in multiple areas:     PRU to notify lead agencies of concerns and update as necessary. │
│ '2' in single area:        Ongoing monitoring through Student Focus Meetings. │
│ '1' in multiple areas:     Ongoing monitoring by tutor and raised in Student Focus Meetings. │
│ '1' in single area:        Ongoing monitoring by tutor whilst concerns persist. │
│                                                                               │
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Fig. 8   Using the matrix (featured in Fig. 7)

The outcomes of the 'vulnerability' and 'challenging' matrix were limited.   Clarifying what was meant by these terms was useful in establishing common meaning, but when a sample of students was used to test the use of the matrix the limitations were apparent. The PRU students were positioned at the high end of the classification system, thus seemingly confirming the accuracy of the labelling and making the exercise redundant. However, another feature was identified – demand characteristics – which I have referred to earlier. Psychological science researchers Nichols and Maner (2008) describe them as subtle 'cues ', and they made the participants aware of what the researcher was trying to prove and how they were expected to behave.

Demand characteristics can produce three possible effects on participant behaviour: they can cause participants to behave positively and supportively, proving or reinforcing the hypothesis; conversely, the participants may go out of their way to disprove the hypothesis or, equally, the participants may ignore the cues and behave naturally. Some researchers (Nichols and Maner, 2008) identified that '… people often act in accordance with the demands of an authority figure' (p152). I had a sense that this was what happened with this activity, and the impact of both bias and demand cues were acutely apparent. The potential for

reducing demand cues was limited, and I had already shared with staff what I was doing because I needed their cooperation. In securing their cooperation, I had unintentionally set myself up for possibly greater impact by demand characteristics. The impact of demand characteristics was also evident in the interview with a student whose positive comments about staff and his experiences at the PRU did not match the views of staff.   Consequently, I decided not to pursue the use of the matrix as an assessment of need tool with all students; however, it may prove more useful in a mainstream setting, perhaps in a different study.

At the point when I was ready to 'recruit' participants, I asked the Deputy Head to speak to a sample of students whom we identified and whom we felt would be confident enough to engage with the process. This exposed some other considerations, such as preparing the Deputy Head for the initial meeting with students, how to organise those meetings so that all students had the option to participate without feeling pressured to do so and further constrains on time. I had discussed what was to be said to students and had prepared packs of information for them and their parents, including consent forms. Consents from parents and students were finally secured beforehand. In the end, this was achieved verbally by phone despite letters and the question schedule being sent home. It was not uncommon for us to experience difficulty in getting written consent, and parents were often much happier talking rather than writing to us. The encounters with students proved interesting. Three students were selected for the pilot but only the two males participated. Sadly, the female was absent for the week of the interviews. Rescheduling was not an option because the students went on 'block release' and she declined to participate in her own time. One student decided to exercise his right in the first instance not to participate, even though he had initially agreed and his parents had consented. When this was not challenged, he later decided to participate. The personal demeanour of the students varied considerably, ranging from the very effusive and confident to those who were shy and who fidgeted throughout.

How questions were framed was important, as was thinking about how the participants might be feeling at the time of the interview. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) pointed out that it was not uncommon for research participants to have a different interpretation of the research questions to the researcher, thus producing miscommunication; some participants may not know or understand why they think, feel or act in a particular way; they might become motivated to disguise or suppress some of their thoughts or feelings

about certain topics in order to protect or defend their inner selves (Quinn 2010), and this posed problems for collecting reliable data and critical validity. I opted for an interview approach with three students and two staff, following the Hollway and Jefferson (2000) approach of a double interview. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) adopted this methodology on the basis that their theoretical starting point was not to take their '… respondent's accounts at face value nor expect them to understand completely their own actions, motivations or feelings' (p43). They advocated a second interview to act as a check on what had already been shared and provide a further opportunity for the participant to reflect on their contributions. This methodology was also supported by Carspeken (1996), and checking back with the participants and comparing what was said with other observable evidence and the interpretations of others would increase the validity of the outcomes through triangulation and create catalytic validity (Lather 1991).

 I was unhappy with the initial questions that I had devised for the pilot and decided to revisit Willis for inspiration. I decided to reframe my questions for staff and students around the themes of attitudes to teachers, conformists and rules; the importance of belonging to a group; 'dossing, blagging and wagging'; the curriculum; boredom and excitement; leisure time; and looking to leaving and future plans because these seemed to be the areas that created most tensions. A copy of the adopted questions schedules for students and staff is located in the appendices (Appendices H and I). For the adults, I also provided the following working definitions of class, culture and resistance for the purpose of establishing a common understanding of the terms in use prior to the group discussions around the questions on the schedule:

Class: '… large scale groupings of people who share common economic resources which strongly

influence the type of lifestyle they are able to lead' (Giddens 2008, p300);

Culture: '... is the way the social relations of a group are structured and shaped; but it is also the

way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted' (Clarke et al. 1976, p11);

Resistance: '... those forms of disaffiliation ... which were in some sense challenges to and

negotiations of the dominant order ... .' (Hall 1996, p293)

I later tested the new questions schedule with two other students and introduced some images of young people in different situations which I hoped would appeal (Spear, 2000) and would stimulate more narrative around what their everyday looked like, and in such a way that I would be able to identify issues of class and culture. The students were not impressed, and I was reminded of Feinstein's (2004) comments about educators thinking of novelty in terms of brightening up the classroom. I had fallen into a trap because the students did not find the images I had selected interesting or helpful, and they were very clear about that, preferring to tell their own life stories. I therefore needed a different approach to stimulate their perceptions of their social reality, such as the introduction of a camera and photographic accounts of their everyday reality. Arguably, student perceptions could have been acquired through questionnaires or essays, which would have been easier to administer but would have added considerable pressure on students who already found writing and language challenging and tiresome. Consequently, I opted for face-to-face encounters with a tested script of questions. This interactive approach enabled participants to have a voice, which could lead to new or different perspectives or issues being exposed. Mindful of Lather's (1991) view that self-reflection can result in a change in thoughts and behaviour, I reasoned that this could be advantageous in a PRU. The questions schedule for staff seemed to be easier, partially because language was less of an issue, but also because they were more in tune with notions of research, how the processes worked and what I was probing.

I increased my contact with staff and students by informally 'dropping in on' classes in addition to the termly formal monitoring of teaching and learning. During these activities and discussions with staff, I compiled reports for the Management Committee and the LA, and also used the information to produce the self-evaluation form (SEF) in readiness for inspection. These reports and self-evaluations were validated through inspection and LA adviser visits. This process enabled me to gather 'soft' data, impressions and perceptions about what was going on at the PRU. This information was evaluated in terms of my own value system and would therefore be subjective. Because some of these 'snapshots' were witnessed out of context, I had to be careful about how I interpreted them and used them. Sometimes it was necessary to clarify events through discussion with the people involved or others who might know more. I used this information to identify questions for further investigation and did not rely on it without more objective evidence.

For the pilot, I opted to test the critical ethnographic approach based on the model identified by Carspeken and Apple(1992) and Carspeken (1996) (Appendix A). At times, I felt the research stages overlapped, and I frequently moved between stages in trying to place the data and follow the progression of the model. Peer validation in situ was impossible to secure because of timetable constraints and lack of available, suitable peers. In the allotted timescales, the evaluations were tenuous as there was insufficient data from the dialogical stages onwards to make any firm and reliable evaluations in relation to the links with social structures, and some of that was to do with the framing of questions as already identified. Although the model acknowledged that the dialogical stage diverted from the naturalistic approach, through the pilot I became more aware of the shift towards the psychosocial approach of Hollway and Jefferson (2000) and the value of the quantitative data in establishing an image of PRU students as well as validating their accounts of their personal histories, which prompting discussion about past events which linked to the present.

The pilot served to test potential tools and clarified my approach to the research task. I abandoned some approaches, such as the matrix of vulnerability and challenge, and discovered the difficulties in framing 'fit for purpose' questions. After 'trial and error', I opted for semi-structured interviews rather than pure narratives. The pilot helped expose my bias, to desensitise staff to the idea of being involved in my research and refine and refocus my questions for the semi-structured interviews. The use of an established questions agenda such as Willis developed also seemed to relieve anxieties about what students were being asked to comment on – it was not a personal attack on staff and certainly not linked to any appraisal or performance issues. The pilot also served to illustrate that my theoretical understanding needed to become more secure, particularly in the way I use key concepts such as class, culture and resistance. For this reason, there were imperfections in the way I approached the pilot study and my methodology, but the learning was invaluable to the fuller research that follows in the next chapter, which expands on this framework as I set out the particular context of the PRU, describe events and outcomes that emerged within the process and present the evidence prior to arriving at my conclusions.

In this section I was able to clarify the research approach and methodology and identify the data sources that are set out in the following section before moving into the final stages of the research in the next chapter.

The case study data sources

The main study took place between September 2009 and August 2012 and student interviews involved nine 14- to 16-year-old students (one girl and eight boys) in paired sessions (with the exception of one boy). Each pair and the individual participated in two interviews approximately a week apart and a follow-up meeting. All students had been excluded from mainstream school and were on the PRU roll during that period but not necessarily for the entire period; such is the nature of PRUs. In addition, four teachers and five teaching assistants also elected to participate in interviews. These were arranged in two groups (teachers and teaching assistants) and again participated in two sessions, each with follow-up via written communication. Gaining consent from the Chair of the Management Committee authorised me to use data that was available to me in my role of Head Teacher. Some degree of slippage in the initial planning and execution occurred as a result of inspection, and securing the appropriate consents from students and the University's Ethics Review Panel took longer than anticipated. Interviews with students took place during the autumn term of 2011, and staff interviews were held early in the spring term of 2012. My data sets came from several sources, as depicted below (Fig. 9), and for each component I will provide a brief synopsis before proceeding further.
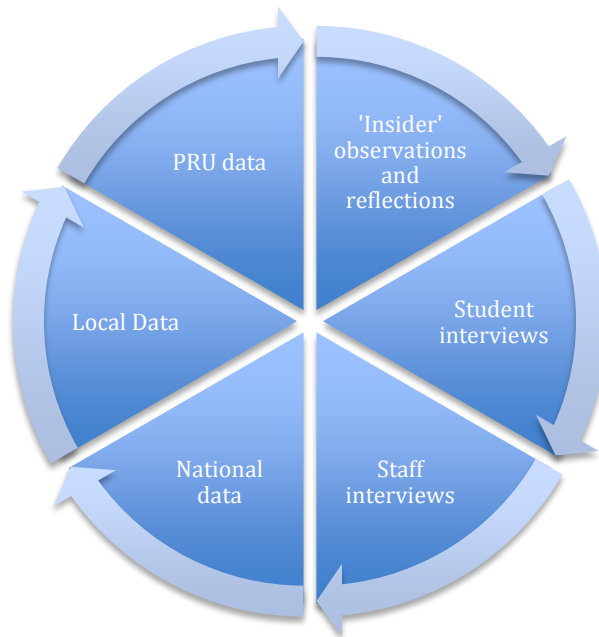
Fig. 9   The research data sets

'Insider' observations and reflections: During the research I kept a 'day-book' in which I recorded the significant points and outcomes of meetings I had with different people (adults and students) during the course of my working day. I attempted to use journals, but maintenance was ad hoc. Other notes of formal observations were recorded on customised pro formas. Also included in my journals were details of other activities gathered formally and informally during the three years of the study, and these included teaching and operating a social area during lunchtimes.   Being on lunch duty was a routine part of my job; it enabled staff to have a lunch break, but it also provided a unique opportunity to engage with the students informally. A classroom was set aside at lunchtimes, and at break times students took to coming into my office if my door was open (which it invariably was) and sitting at my meetings table for a chat. It felt very comfortable and 'grown up'.

Student interviews: I had meetings with students to explain the process and give them opportunities to opt out if they did not want to participate.   From these preliminary discussions, students opted to be interviewed in pairs, with the exception of one who preferred to be interviewed individually. I arranged the

interviews during the school day, negotiating their release from lessons with the students and their teachers. I provided them with disposable cameras for the task of capturing images that were important to them and reflected what life was like for them. At the start of the first interviews, I presented the students with the proposed questions to focus their responses on particular themes I wished to cover. In some instances, time ran over and the interviews were completed in two sittings. All students had a follow-up meeting after the initial interviews to check the transcripts for accuracy and meaning and to validate what they and their peer had said. The meetings were audio recorded and saved onto a portable USB file that was stored securely in a locked cabinet within my office – also locked. In each case, students accepted the content of what was recorded, and enjoyed correcting errors in spelling or punctuation.

Staff interviews: Given the individual characteristics of the staff, I was concerned that the teachers may have dominated the interviews, and as the teachers and teaching assistant occupied different class positions I wanted each group to feel comfortable with their responses; consequently; I invited staff to be involved as two distinct groups, teachers and teaching assistants. These meetings took place after the school day. As with students, the staff groups had the schedule of questions at the start of the meeting, with working definitions of class, culture and resistance included.   Again, it took two meetings for each group to complete the questions and a further meeting to validate the data.

National and local data: The national data about key stage performance was readily available online or was accessed through the LA's Policy and Planning teams, and provided a statistical context in which to locate the research. This enabled a comparison of how well the students were doing in relation to national expectations for their age, and also enabled me to identify their rates of progression between the key stages and, perhaps most importantly, when learning stalled. Data sources included census profiles, RAISEonline (a government data source launched in 2006), Fischer Family Trust (FFT – an independent non-profit charity organisation that focuses exclusively on producing schools' performance data analysis) and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Information about which services or agencies students were already involved with or that they had previously engaged with was accessible through the LA's Children's Services on request, and the LA kept information on exclusions. The police data was made available on request and included the reasons why students were known to the police, i.e. as victims or perpetrators, or as witnesses

or associates of known offenders; the frequency with which the students were involved in encounters with the police was also included in the data. In my role as Head Teacher, this was information that I had access to and routinely used as part of my work responsibilities and reporting activities. This information is presented in full in Appendices G1–5 and is reported on in the research in the following chapter.

PRU data: The PRU received some school files and pre-placement referral documentation when students arrived at the PRU. Information was often sparse and disproportionally skewed towards behaviour and there was little information on learning. This had to be established or evidenced in order to determine progress and attainment so as to address the first of the research questions. Over time, this was supplemented with progress reports, behaviour logs, letters to parents, copies of courses and certificates and attendance records. In addition, the PRU produced self-evaluation forms, development plans and reports to line managers and the Management Committee and its sub-committees. Notes of staff meetings were kept, and monitoring information from lesson observations, reviews of teachers' curriculum folders and scrutiny of students' work were also used to compile evidence for inspection and performance management.

Chapter 4: Presenting the evidence

In this penultimate chapter I focus specifically on the case study and its components. To give structure to the presentation I will follow the stages set out in the following diagram:
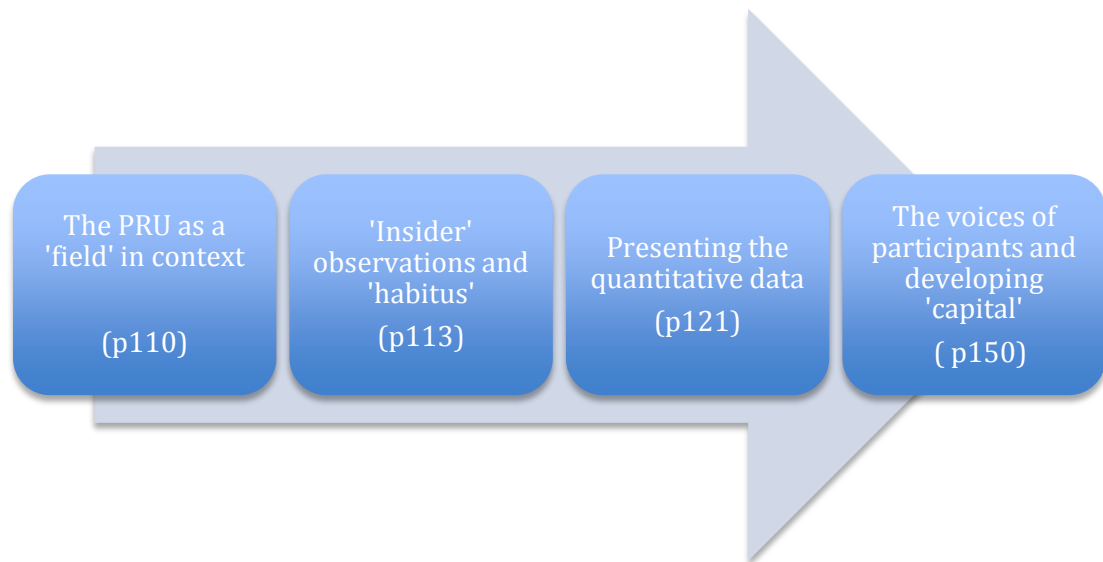
Fig. 10 Diagram to represent the stages of the case study and outcomes

The PRU as a field in context

In the Bourdieuian sense, I conceptualised the PRU as a social field in which struggles and manoeuvres are part of the daily problematic, and to paraphrase Jenkins (2002, p85): the *existence of the PRU presupposes and, in its functioning, creates a belief on the part of the participants in the legitimacy and value of the capital which is at stake (intellectual distinction) in the field. This legitimate interest in the PRU is produced by the same historical processes which produce the field itself.* Pupil referral units emerged as a response to the statutory requirement to provide educational opportunity to all children and young people where mainstream provision was not an option; and this was legitimised by the commitment to provide educational opportunities in pursuit of intellectual distinction amid other personal and social aspirations evidenced through the Ofsted frameworks.

The PRU, which was established in September 2009, was a site of struggles, actions and interventions which constituted the culture of the organisation itself. The PRU was a hierarchical organisation which had to work within statutory frameworks, rules, regulations, internal codes of practice and procedures in broadly the same way that mainstream schools did. Non-compliance or resistance was manifested in behaviour that Willis (1977) described as counter-school culture, whereby students attempted to create or win time and space from the daily rules and routines by producing persistent disruptive behaviour patterns which challenged the structures and ethos of the organisation. Jackson (2006) described this behaviour as 'laddish', seeing it more as a response/defensive strategy operating in different, multiple ways among some students to combat fear of failure and to 'fit in' or belong to certain dominant social groups.

The main hub of the PRU was located in a post-16 college near the centre of a small town in a largely rural part of the West Midlands where unemployment was higher than the national rate; more than two-thirds of the population were economically active (predominantly with elementary occupations and manufacturing), and just under a quarter of the residents aged over 16 had no academic or professional qualifications. Therefore, the local population was deemed to be predominantly working class in the traditional sense. The PRU was opened in September 2009 following the closure of a 'medical' PRU and a 'behaviour' PRU, the latter of which had been placed in 'special measures' the previous term. The new PRU inherited staff and students from both closed PRUs and initially operated on a split site arrangement. It was the only 14–16 PRU provision within the local authority and funded 30 full-time (25 hours) placements on site and a small number of students who were educated off-site. It catered for students who were 'unable to cope' with mainstream school for a variety of reasons. The ability or inability to cope with school indicated the problematic nature of the statement, which is located within issues of resiliency and/or disadvantage and disability. The measurement of resiliency is possible by trained specialists such as Educational Psychologists, but was rarely used; and as with the concepts of disadvantage and disability, it was a social construct of division in the same way that 'difficult' was used to describe or label a distinct group of non-compliant young people.

Students were referred to the PRU through a mechanism called the Fair Access Panel (FAP) and also directly via the LA in cases of a first or second permanent exclusion when an alternative school had not been

identified within six days of the exclusion and for students who had a third permanent exclusion. FAP consisted of Head Teachers, LA officers and the Heads of this PRU and its 'sister' PRU (which catered for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3). At times, other professionals were invited to attend when necessary. At the FAP meeting, schools presented their cases for consideration; the panel deliberated and then made suggestions to the school for further action or agreed on a placement at one of the two PRUs.

In the first three years, 150 students had been registered at the PRU, and their recorded information was used to define the learning and social profile of students for performance reports to line managers, the Management Committee and inspection and was used as an evidence base in this study too. A large proportion of the early cohorts were part time as only permanently excluded students had to be offered full-time provision. Whilst this practice reduced exclusions and enabled the LA to increase the number of students who could access the PRU, an unintended consequence was that non-excluded students were placed in part-time arrangements, creating a potential safeguarding issue around what these students were doing with the rest of their time and what was happening to their work ethic. Schools responded by adopting 'modified timetable' arrangements, which passed the responsibility for supervision of learning to parents when the student was not in school. Students were then registered as 'educated off-site', gaining a present mark which did not guarantee that students attended or received education. Off-site providers and schools registers should tally to show absences, but block-marking masked this, effectively creating higher levels of attendance than the actual ones. When students were referred to the PRU, prior attendance was an important benchmark for showing improvement. However, with more schools seeking alternative placements for their most difficult students and being prepared to exclude them, the authority had a difficult task in trying to support schools without disadvantaging students. Through the FAP protocols, many students were presented for 'persistent disruptive behaviour', which placed them at risk of permanent exclusion. School managers often cited conflict over uniform, appearance, smoking, refusing to do work/homework, lateness to lessons and truancy, fighting and threatening behaviour as reasons for their referral.

'Insider' observations and 'habitus'

In this section I present observations of student behaviours in the PRU during 2009–2012, and in doing so try to understand the ways in which issues of class, culture and habitus contributed to reproducing social inequality through resistance to learning. Habitus '… provides the framework for action shaping what is considered im/possible and un/desirable' (Archer et al. 2010, p33) and represents the sum of all experiences – emotional and physical – which are as much imprinted on the body as the body is part of the social world (Archer et al. 2010; Skeggs 2004) and which Reay (2004, p435) describes as '… a complex internalized core from which everyday experiences emanate'. The PRU as a social field brings together the students' 'working-class' habitus with the middle-class culture and values of the PRU as a structural organisation (Archer et al. 2010) where struggles for identity and control surface on a daily basis. In addition, Wright et al. (2010) identify 'group habitus' as a collective term for those students who share the experience of school exclusion, and they say that this disadvantaged position often produces similar responses of resistance and has a detrimental effect on how excluded young people view themselves.

During the first year, split-site arrangements resulted in two distinct groups of students. The most significant difference between them was the nature of their behaviours. At the main site, behaviour was overt, characterised by loud questioning or arguing, non-compliance, verbal abuse, confrontation, aggression and ultimately assault or destruction, whilst at the satellite site it was a more passive resistance, quietly non-compliant but involving generally more academically able students. In an attempt to break the culture of reactive behaviour being transmitted from one group to another (cultural reproduction), the split site enabled new students to be isolated from the influences of the established Year 11s. In year two, the satellite became a Year 10 facility with the Year 11s at the college, again to limit the exchange of values and behaviours. At this point, most of the Year 10 students were dual registered as opposed to part time, with the intention that schools should be sharing the provision arrangements. This was good because the facilities in the satellite provision were very limited. It soon became apparent though that schools were not supplementing the PRU provision and students were effectively part time, often unsupervised and with the freedom to be 'at large' in the community. Being concerned about safeguarding issues, I admitted them to the PRU full time. This dramatically reduced the numbers of available places and the curriculum had to be

adapted very quickly. Also, the teaching space that seemed adequate for a limited amount of time suddenly became oppressive, even more so as the boys began to grow and physically filled the space. I noted that some students clearly liked to be dealt with by senior staff; it was something they were used to as it possibly gave them a greater sense of kudos, or they hoped that staff would be overruled, which would: a) increase the frequency with which senior leaders were used to troubleshoot; b) give the students more control; and c) undermine staff. From a management perspective, this was not good practice because staff were not involved in managing behaviour, and senior leaders were being constrained in their strategic roles because they were gridlocked with discipline issues. Through these events, I came to realise that the culture of the PRU was fluid; and it changed in response to changing circumstances.

The local demographic information (census data, source withheld to protect anonymity) identified that the catchment area for the PRU was predominantly 'working class', as determined by standard government classification rather than the sociologists' approach of Savage and others. A careers audit involving all 25 students on roll in 2010 gave an indication of what exposure students had to different parts of the world of work (Fig. 11).

Relationship to student	Type of jobs engaged in
Grandparents	Window maker; butcher; teacher; driving instructor (2), car lot; army; owned a pub; works at TFS; pharmacist; cleaner (2); engineer; owned cleaning business (2); owned plumbing/building company; army depot; care of old people; shop work; accountancy.
Parents	Nurse; shop worker; HGV mechanic; building worker; cavity wall insulator, selling motor vehicles; chef; pub owner; chemist; road-sweeper; cleaner; builder (2), supervisor; runs a pub; lorry driver/distribution; home carer; steel fabricator; pub work; taxi business, car job; fork-lift driver; tree surgeon; security guard; factory work (2), care home; training provider.
Uncles/Aunts	Mechanic/dentist; window maker; work for British Gas; vets, Severn Trent Water; lorry driver (2); builder (2); postmaster; taxi driver; owns bricklaying company; owns hairdressing shop; cooking; fork-lift driver; police dog handler (drugs).
Brothers/Sisters	Chef/shop worker (2); receptionist; on the dole; work in pub; plumbing; working in family cleaning business; builder; apprenticeship.
Close cousins	Working in an office; university; solicitor; builder (2); shop work; firefighter; fitness instructor.
Friends	McDonalds (2); mechanics; beauty sell-on; drug-dealing (2), pro-boxer, football player (3); car mechanic; lorry driver; shop owner; shop work; factory work.

Fig. 11 Jobs the families of students have been involved in
(numbers in brackets indicate the number of responses to that type of work)

Students were not always clear about the actual job that was being done, but they knew where their friends or relatives worked. For instance, where a business was identified, the work may have been professional, managerial, administrative, skilled or unskilled. Some family members or friends had experienced a number of jobs, and the range of jobs listed ranged from unskilled to skilled and professional jobs. It was also interesting that a number of their contacts had owned or were owners of their own businesses, indicating a self-made, entrepreneurial characteristic. Students were then asked to identify their dream jobs, what they thought their first job was likely to be and where they thought they might be in two and five years' time. Fig. 12 illustrates their aspirations and sense of reality.   Archer et al.'s (2010) study 'Urban Youth and Schooling' showed ' … "at risk" young people did overwhelmingly express a range of "respectable" and "responsible" aspirations' (p 81), and this was also evidenced in this exercise.   Also similar to Archer et al.'s study, the majority indicated an optimistic development in their aspirations over time for increased responsibility, and their choices were gendered in that girls aspired to 'feminine' occupations in the caring professions, retail and beauty whilst the boys tended to adopted more 'masculine' manual trades such as those in the areas of mechanics, construction or sport.

Dream job?	Most likely first job?	After 2 yrs?	After 5 yrs?
Lifeguard	Lifeguard	Lifeguard	Lifeguard
Motor mechanic	Motor vehicle/tyre-fitting training	Experienced tyre fitter	Mechanic, trained and qualified
Footballer	Building apprenticeship	Own building business	
Working with children – residential care	Apprenticeship (health and social care)	Residential childcare worker	
Porn star	Porn star	Porn star	
Army or bricklayer	Something to do with a market	College	Army
Nanny	Working in a nursery	Hope to have more qualifications and responsibility	
Mechanic	Something boring, getting an apprenticeship	Hopefully have a job as a mechanic	
Vet	Working in a fishing shop	Being a vet	
Footballer	Builder	Builder	
Mechanic	Not likely to have one	Hopefully, being in a full-time job	
Plumber	Retail	Qualified plumber	Manage own company
Motor mechanic	In a garage	Owning own garage	Own a big company of garages
Self-employed, body shop	Tesco's or something like that	Applying for body shops or bike breakers'	
PE teacher	Saturday job	PE teacher	Head of Department
Lawyer or playing for Man United	Mc Donald's	College	Plumbing
Footballer	Factory work	Factory work	Hopefully factory manager

Fig. 12 Dreams and aspirations

Most students saw themselves starting at the bottom of a job set, and some had aspirations to become

qualified and have managerial responsibilities later on, gaining qualifications after they left school. At this

stage, most of them had identified themselves with gendered unskilled job sets that they had already had

some direct knowledge of, and this was bound up in the images and identity they constructed for

themselves. Students said they wanted jobs, but were not actively looking for part-time work, thus

adopting a 'wait and see what turns up' approach. As with Archer et al.'s (2010) findings, 'aspirations are

closely bound up with young people's social class … and the constraints enacted by particular classed and

gendered habitus' (p97). A Connexions/careers adviser commented that most of the PRU students got their

jobs through personal recommendation from family members or friends, rendering qualifications

redundant. As Willis (1977) identified, this attitude existed among the 'lads' in his study and contributed to

perpetuating the idea that qualifications were not always necessary to get a job. This attitude contributes to reproducing social inequalities and reduces the need for applications and interviews – thus reducing the potential for failure too.

From Fig. 12, it is evident that the students did think about their future. Quinn (2010) argued that it is through symbolic and imagined networks and connections that the impetus to move socially is derived. She said, '[w]ithout the imagined, we are stuck' (p142), and thence imagined ambition and imagined symbolic networks become aspirational, or the dream of what could be without inequality getting in the way, creating 'aspirational capital', which Yosso (2005) defined as '… the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers' (p77). In this context, aspirational capital is also the capacity for resiliency. Contrary to Ball et al.'s (1999) suggestion that many young people blur fact and fantasy to imagine a future, these students had identified jobs that were mostly within reach – which, from a more middle-class perspective, might be regarded as having low aspirations. This brings into play value judgements about the rights and merits of 'high/low' aspirations, which serve to undermine a positive attribute of the students' ambition – to work.

I continued to talk to students about their families and interests informally, often whilst on lunch duty or when they came into my office for a chat. Early attempts to give them activities broke down with horseplay, and some easy chairs that I had brought in to try and create a more sociable atmosphere were treated badly. This resulted in a new course to the enrichment programme, an upholstery 'course' in which a group of male students (gendered by circumstances not design) learned how to re-cover armchairs using power tools and some traditional techniques. They enjoyed learning new skills and dexterity and gained confidence from the exercise, which Willis related to the '… credentials for entry into shopfloor culture …' (p52). They showed pride in what they did and the abuse of the furniture stopped. We were concerned that the curriculum was predisposed towards male interests and wanted to offer activities and learning that would appeal to the girls' interests and aspirations, although there were significantly fewer of them, which made it all the more important to have a balance. Some of the girls were expressing an interest in beauty therapies, and that gave impetus to developing a short course in facial massages and nail art that then became a motivator and a reward. Whilst on the surface this may seem to be reinforcing gendered job

aspirations and gendered habitus (Connolly and Healy 2004) – which it did – there was little point in offering activities that conflicted with their image and identity issues. Students were willing to have informal conversations with me in which they talked about what they hoped to do when they left school. Their job choices were gendered, as illustrated in Figs. 11 and 12, but I was left wondering if these conversations were also being used to 'try it (the imagined job) on for size' to see how I and, more importantly, their peers, responded: whether we thought it was a good idea or not and whether more powerful peers would accept the potential choice and 'allow' them to pursue the choice or decry them for copying more powerful others or ridicule their choice. The 'pull of the street' (Archer et al. 2010, p26) can equate to the pull of the gang or neighbourhood or of the identity with perceived, powerful others. These tensions contributed to showing how habitus was being shaped from within and without and how choice was being validated, and how the presence of imagined social capital in developing resiliency to rejection and exclusion contributed to the process.

Students had mixed responses to rewards and different cohorts valued different incentives, resulting in a constantly changing rewards framework. What was consistently valued was 'the postcard'. Subject staff issued them for good behaviour or work in lessons, and when either or both were exceptional, the Head Teacher's postcard was posted home. Staff also phoned or texted parents (using the PRU mobile) when behaviour and work had been good, and students liked this personal and individual recognition. Sanctions were another matter entirely. Students generally paid little or no regard to sanctions other than exclusion, which they sometimes deliberately tried to engineer. Detentions could not be enforced. Issues of image and identity were evident in behaviour as students grouped informally and turned to each other for support with their behaviours – constantly trying to create a critical mass of resistance. Each time a new student arrived, there was a period of posturing and challenge (bullying) as leadership was contested. Resistant, daring and challenging behaviour was, for some, a chance to interrupt the norm in order to create time and space to assess the situation; for others it reflected high degrees of anxiety and some did it for the fun of it – the dare – because they identified a potential opportunity to get away with it. Behaviour was managed by clear expectations matched with influence and respect. Students had to want to participate and want to belong, and therefore the challenge in teaching was to make the learning interesting and relevant. In mainstream schools, many of our students were denied access to trips and the use of specialist equipment,

such as that in craft rooms or science labs, because of their behaviour. This was quite understandable, but we tried to make those activities accessible. Even so, there were times when it was too risky to take some students to some venues, and this was made clear in the hope that they would change their behaviour if they wanted to participate.

Jenkins (2002) described habitus as '… the source of "objective" practices, but is itself a set of "subjective" generative principles produced by the objective patterns of social life' (p82) and as such is important to identity development. The concept of identity invites belonging. Quinn (2010) described identity as the 'inescapable self' in similar terms to habitus – 'inescapable and embodies, moving with us wherever we go … understood as imprinted and inexorable' (p16) and as being in a state of constant flux in the pursuit of being in the 'right' place. There was a point when some students said they wanted a PRU uniform, which indicated a desire to belong, and this was evidenced again when they worked with an external agency to develop a website for the PRU. Others preferred to identify themselves with the casual dress code of the college, enabling them to blend in and not 'stick out', as they explained it, which perhaps suggests identity is a choice whereas habitus is a consequence of being. Students did not like or want to 'stick out' in the classroom either, and this impacted on teaching, learning, attainment and progress. It was not seen as 'cool' to want to learn, but they mostly enjoyed seeing their own progress and being congratulated for it. At times, I wondered if the students were more concerned with be-*ing* than be-*longing*, and decided to retain this thought in relation to what the students said about their educational experiences. It seemed to be part of their identity to be seen to resist learning, even if they wanted to learn, and teachers had to factor this into their planning. Being different, 'cool' and making progress were significant issues in the learning environment, and this presented a real challenge for the students and the staff because identities and control were at stake.

Media, literature relating to the study and young people themselves often portrayed youth in a bleak light (Archer et al. 2010; Delamont 2000; Sleaford 2001); however, some PRU students from areas of high deprivation were quite enterprising and entrepreneurial. One student had established himself with his own business cleaning up the hard drives on computers. In some respects, this 'goes against the grain' of expectations. However, remembering Willis's comment that these students can be 'creative and craftedly

interesting'; that those with high resiliency find motivation through low expectations (Fuller 1984); and that indicative attainment levels can be high, perhaps we should not be so surprised when they start their own businesses and become successful. However, and in most circumstances, the reality is that most students who fail to thrive academically are also subjects of poverty from families lacking in economic capital. Where that was not the case, the students were a minority group in an overwhelming population of underachievers with social and emotional issues. These particular students seemingly acquiesced or gave up (fatalism?) in order to fit in with the rest of the PRU students – they become chameleon-like and the dominant forces were reproduced in the PRU, quite possibly because their status or identity needs were satisfied in other ways; Brownlie (2010) suggested that they '… learn to negotiate identity projects without seeking affirmation from dominant cultures.'(p1). They somehow convinced others that they were 'hard' or had unique experiences or knowledge that made them an authority on a subject. Bourdieu established that in different social settings people behave intuitively in different ways. Before students arrived at the PRU they had already experienced and learned how to adapt to different environments and friendship groups, and could therefore operate quite successfully in multiple, competing cultures, i.e. home, school, community and friendship groups. The pilot did not capture this information. The national education policy framework is geared towards overcoming inequalities and promoting inclusion at all levels but it does little to address or understand and work with the distinct cultural issues of young people in an adult world in a PRU.

The learning community is generally accepted as being founded on meritocratic middle-class cultural values (Ainley and Allen 2010; Archer et al. 2010; Ball 2003; Entwistle 2012; Perry and Francis 2010; Wright et al. 2010), and this can 'jar' when the other structures are founded on working-class cultural and social values. The young person is drawn in different directions by each social structure and moves between them. It would seem reasonable to surmise that class and cultural reproduction are likely to be reinforced within and by the social structures to which they have the greatest exposure. Ironically, exclusion in any sector can have a devastating effect, as identified in the previous chapter.

From the 'insider' observer position, I was able to identify some features of class and culture that contributed to the ways in which the students viewed themselves and their world, but which remained

limited. I was able to see that the students displayed school/classroom behaviours that were broadly similar to Willis's 'lads', although the prevailing economic climate of 2009–2012 followed a world financial crisis and a UK economic depression that was quite different to the situation in the 1970s when Willis conducted his research. In addition, Willis's lads were being prepared for work at the age of 16, whilst the students in this study were facing pressure to continue participating in education or training until the age of 18, whether they had the ability or aspiration for it or not. I noted that under duress these resistant behaviours amplified and altered the culture of the PRU, which in turn affected student behaviour (the chicken and egg syndrome) and their identity as resistant learners. They were making a statement in the only way they knew how – through non-conformity. Their exposure to certain job families was largely working class and they were tending to follow the pattern as in Willis's study in that there was little appetite for 'breaking the mould' and venturing into more academic fields. In the next section, I shall establish the potential for PRU students to do that if they chose to, by examining the quantitative data amassed from the 150 students on roll over the three-year research period.

Presenting the quantitative data

In this section I explore the available statistical data for the students on roll at the PRU during the research period in order to establish patterns and trends in the characteristics of referred students. I looked at national indicators/attainment levels to determine key stage progress leading up to and including GCSE outcomes. I also consider the impact of time away from learning (attendance and exclusion), issues of economic deprivation and what the recorded reasons (behaviours) for their referral to the PRU were. The information was held on various databases used by the PRU, the LA's Children's Services and the police. The detailed data is shown in matrix form in the appendices (G1–5).

There were four distinct cohorts involved in the study: three were Year 11 students and one was a Year 10 group, and the numbers in each are shown below:

Cohort	2009/10 - Year 11	2010/11 - Year 11	2011/12 - Year 11	2011/12 - Year 10
Students	62	41	29	20

Table 1 The number of students in each cohort

Most of the students on roll were male but girls made up almost half of the cohort each year (Fig. 13) by the end of the year. This feature was consistent with the common belief that more boys than girls were excluded from schools (Cole et al. 1998, 1999; Daniels et al. 2003; DfE 2013; Jackson 2006; Lloyd 2006). Teaching groups were sometimes arranged by gender if it was thought to be in the students' interests, but most often, the girls were dispersed among the teaching groups, resulting in some mixed and some all-boys groups. A girls' group was a rare occurrence because of numbers or relationships within the group.

	09/10 (Yr 11)	10/11 (Yr 11)	11/12 (Yr11)	11/12 (Yr10)	Total
Boys	40	25	20	13	98
Girls	22	16	9	7	54
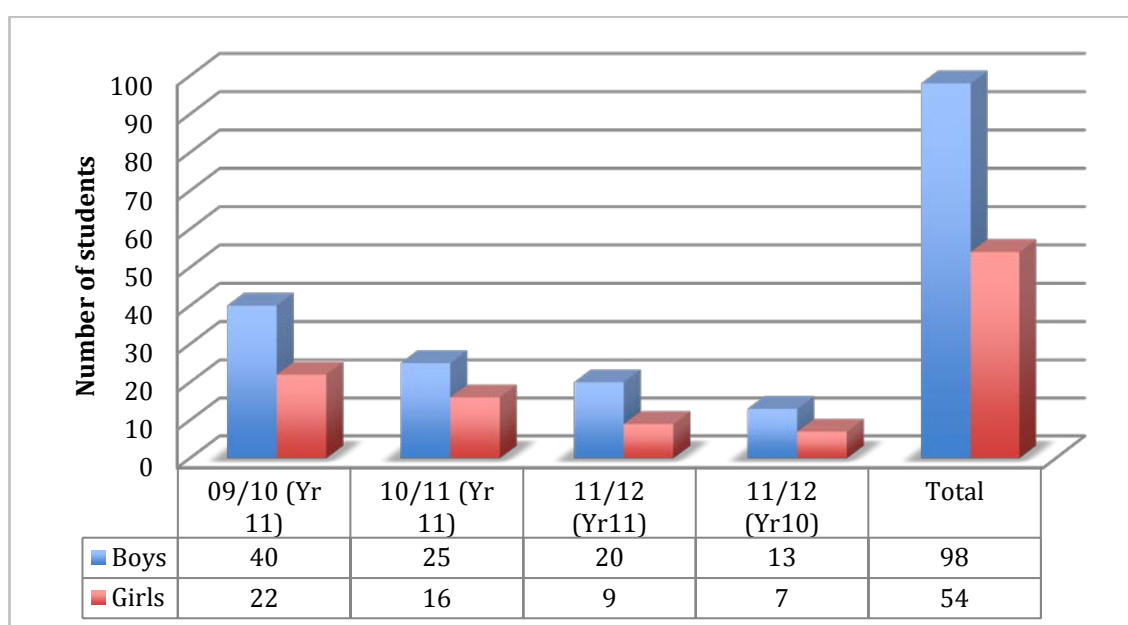
Fig. 13   The gender balance for each cohort

The formal processes for gathering student information were, as mentioned earlier, flawed, often resulting in missing details. Within the LA, student information was kept on a standard computerised school management information system (CMIS). When students transferred between schools or were referred to the PRU, their information was transferred electronically on admission, and the student file, which often contained letters and reports that were not stored electronically, was passed on to the receiving school. For students from out-of-county or who were Elective Home Educated (EHE), the information received was often minimal. Attainment data was supplemented from other sources, and the PRU managed to access national curriculum (NC) key stage information from RAISEonline and, to a lesser extent, the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) data. Schools and local authorities in their self-evaluation and target-setting practice use both databases extensively. Unfortunately, FFT data on the PRU students was extremely patchy (Appendix G)

and was therefore of little use. For the vast majority of students, the PRU was able to acquire Key Stage 1 and 2 attainment data. Key Stage 3 data was sparse and came to be reliant on teacher assessment rather than a national test. Attendance data was stored on the PRU's CMIS system, but inconsistencies resulted in the PRU creating its own, more accurate, database. Information relating to permanently excluded students was straightforward to access, but to 'back-track' on fixed-term exclusions prior to placement was not, and 'grey exclusions' – the unrecorded times a student is sent from a classroom or home – were impossible to quantify. Therefore, exclusions data was limited to permanent exclusions.

Lack of economic capital was identified using eligibility for free school meals (FSM) and the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) based on postcodes. Many students had been involved with multiple agencies through the CAF and TAC protocols. These were fluid situations, supported by organisations that were going through immense restructuring at the time, and consequently accurate information sometimes became difficult to compile. However, I was able to identify which of the PRU students were known to the police, and this gave a picture of the behaviours and incidents that some students were exposed to or involved in outside the PRU. This information showed that some links were evident between educational attainment, crime and environmental and economic deprivation that collectively indicated a lack of cultural capital.

Attainment and progression

National curriculum key stage data was available for four successive groups of students, and each group was referred to as a year-group cohort. Using the available data, I mapped out how many students had made progress through the national curriculum levels in English, maths and science and how many had shown no progress or regressed. Because I compared different-sized cohorts, I presented the numerical values as percentages and illustrated the trends graphically (Figs. 14–17). For contextual purposes, the percentage of pupils (all schools) achieving at least level 4 in English/reading between 2009 and 2012 ranged from 83%–87% and 79%–84% for maths (DfE 2013). It should also be noted that the samples in this study were too small for statistical reliability.

	English KS1>2	Maths KS1>2	Science KS1>2	English KS2>3	Maths KS2>3	Science KS2>3
■ Made 3 NC Levels	4.84	4.84	16.13	1.61	1.61	0
■ Made 2 NC Levels	32.26	20.97	29.03	1.61	8.06	3.23
■ Made 1 NC Level	24.19	37.1	17.74	16.13	17.74	16.13
■ Made No Progress	1.61	0	0	9.68	16.13	20.97
■ Regressed	0	0	0	1.61	1.61	8.06
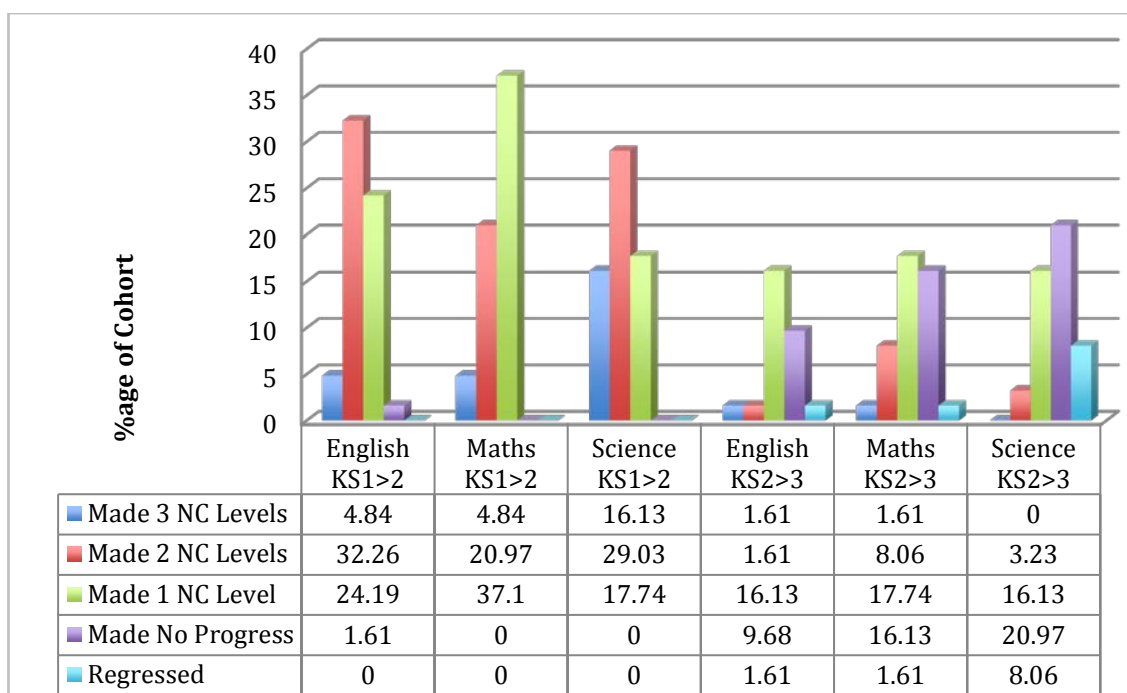
Fig. 14   National curriculum progression rates – 2009/10 Year 11 Cohort (62 students)

	English KS1>2	Maths KS1>2	Science KS1>2	English KS2>3	Maths KS2>3	Science KS2>3
■ Made 3 NC Levels	4.88	7.32	12.2	0	0	0
■ Made 2 NC Levels	41.46	35.59	51.22	0	14.63	4.88
■ Made 1 NC Level	29.27	39.02	14.63	17.07	9.96	17.07
■ Made No Progress	2.44	0	0	29.27	19.51	24.39
■ Regressed	0	0	0	2.44	7.32	4.88
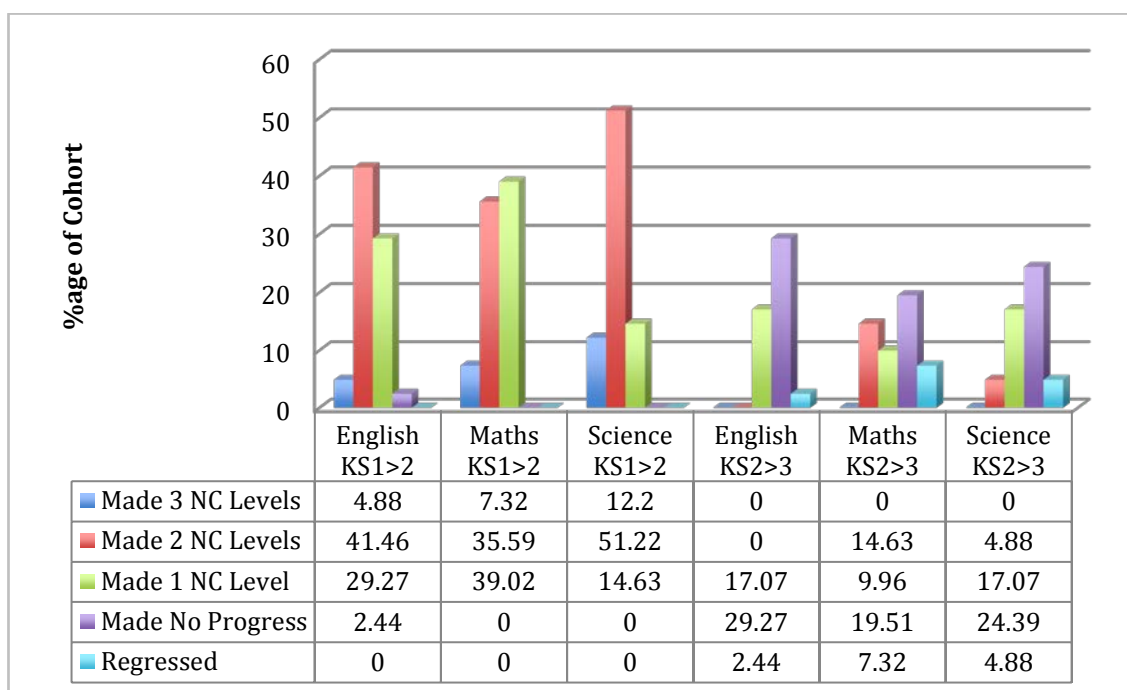
Fig. 15   National curriculum progression rates – 2010/11 Year 11 Cohort (41 students)

	English KS1>2	Maths KS1>2	Science KS1>2	English KS2>3	Maths KS2>3	Science KS2>3
Made 3 NC Levels	13.79	6.89	20.68	0	0	0
Made 2 NC Levels	37.93	44.82	34.48	3.44	0	3.44
Made 1 NC Level	17.24	17.24	13.79	3.44	13.79	10.34
Made No Progress	0	0	0	13.79	13.79	6.89
Regressed	0	0	0	6.89	0	3.44
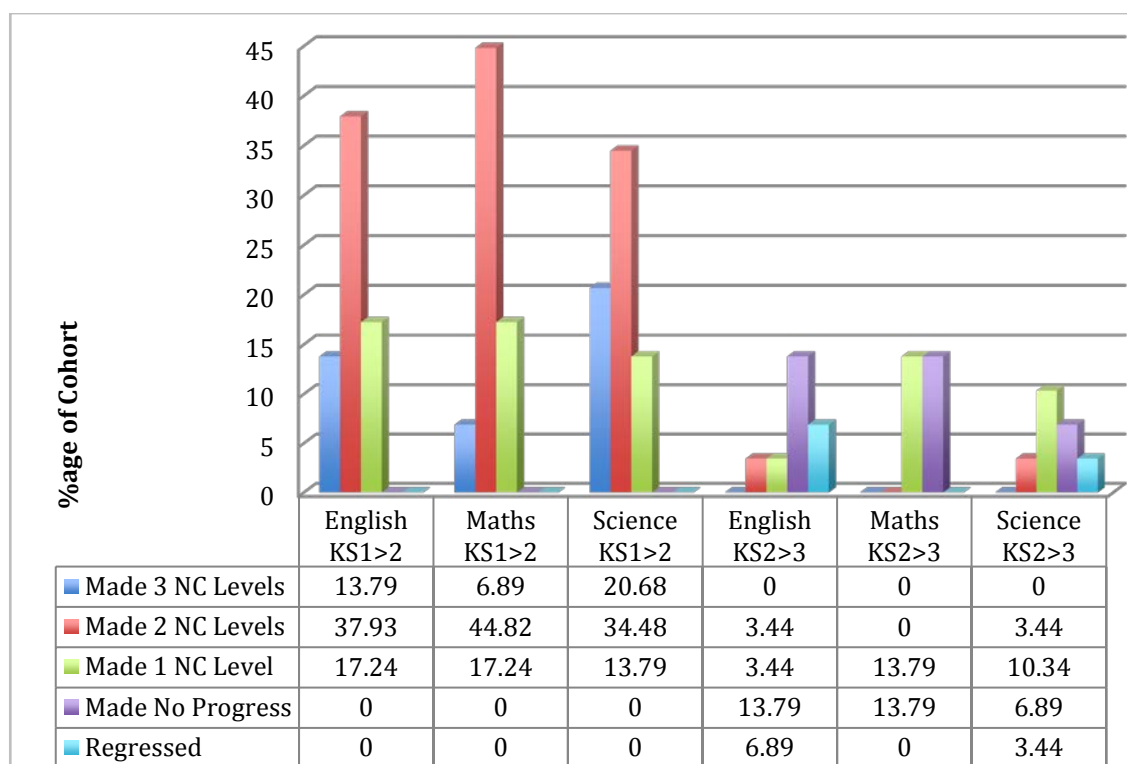
Fig. 16   National curriculum progression rates – 2011/12 Year 11 Cohort (29 students)

	English KS1>2	Maths KS1>2	Science KS1>2	English KS2>3	Maths KS2>3	Science KS2>3
Made 3 NC Levels	0	5	10	0	0	0
Made 2 NC Levels	20	15	25	0	0	0
Made 1 NC Level	20	25	15	5	10	15
Made No Progress	10	5	5	10	5	0
Regressed	0	0	0	0	0	0
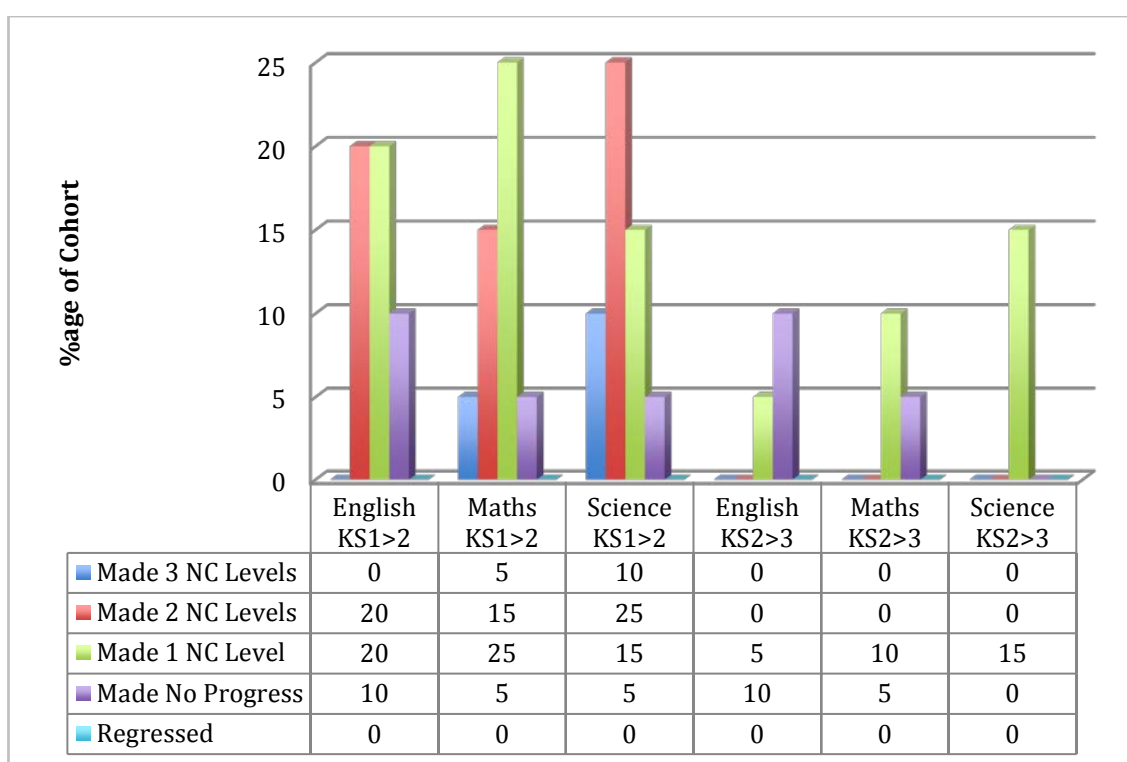
Fig. 17   National curriculum progression rates – 2011/12 Year 10 Cohort (20 students)

Students who did not make any progress between the key stages effectively regressed because the time and learning opportunities in between did not add anything to their performance. Between Key Stages 1 and 2, most students had made average progress (an increase of two levels) in all three subjects, with some minor fluctuations. A few in each cohort, with the exception of the 2011/12 Year 11 cohort, did not make any progress in English. This was important, because language acquisition underpins communication and educational performance. Bourdieu (1984) determined the importance of linguistic ability in personal and social development, and here we were seeing, not surprisingly, a lack of development in the acquisition of literacy skills, which clearly impacts on 'agency', 'habitus' and 'capital – often limiting them – and ultimately on the social position the student holds amongst his/her peers and the adults. The situation changed dramatically between Key Stages 2 and 3, when the majority of students made little or no progress, certainly nothing in line with national expectations. For many students, learning had stalled and performance had dipped, and we did not know the reasons why. It was possible that students themselves did not know or, because of their depressed language skills, were unable to articulate why this had happened. But not all students at the PRU lacked ability. Indeed, in examining the NC levels that students had achieved (Table 2), there were some that had reached level 5 and above, but they had only made one or two levels of progression between the key stages.

Number of students achieving NC level 5 or above in one or more core subjects		%age of students achieving NC level 5 or above in one or more core subjects	
09/10 (Yr. 11)	22	09/10 (Yr. 11)	35.48
10/11 (Yr. 11)	13	10/11 (Yr. 11)	25.19
11/12 (Yr. 11)	9	11/12 (Yr. 11)	31.03
11/12 (Yr. 10)	5	11/12 (Yr. 10)	25

Table 2 Numbers of students achieving NC level 5 or higher

When students arrived at the PRU, some at the end of Key Stage 3 and others during Key Stage 4, many had already became disengaged from learning, and for some this was evident by Key Stage 2. Progression rates of individual students between the key stages showed quite spiky learning profiles. This is normal. Learning is not linear, but when large sections of the curriculum are missed out and the building blocks for progression to GCSEs are weak, then learning and achievement becomes harder and there is even greater temptation to disengage further and not sit the exams.

Not all of the students on the PRU roll attended the college unit. Some were placed on Alternative

Provision (AP), with either a single provider or a combination of providers. The students often had reduced

hours because they could not cope or would not comply, and the focus was on developing resiliency,

engagement and vocational skills. Sometimes, this was used as either a short-term or long-term

alternative, based on what the students needed to keep them engaged with learning. These providers had

a literacy and numeracy core, but it was at quite a low level. Although the key stage data indicated the

potential for GCSE achievements, these students tended not to access GCSE courses, either through the

choices they made or because AP providers did not have staff who were capable of delivering GCSE courses.

Therefore, such placements limited their potential to improve and achieve higher attainment levels. This

can be shown as follows:

	No. of students on Alternative Provision	Shown as a %age of the cohort							
GCSE grades			A	B	C	D	E	F	G
09/10 (Yr. 11)	17	27.41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10/11 (Yr. 11)	17	41.46			1	2	2		
11/12 (Yr. 11)	10	34.48							
11/12 (Yr. 10)	7	35							

Table 3 GCSE outcomes for Alternative Provision students

Two students from the 2010/11 cohort were home-tutored for medical reasons and both gained two GCSE

grades each. The 2011/12 cohorts had one Year 11 and four Year 10 students on roll, but were placed in

schools. Although the number of students placed on AP had reduced each year, the proportion of the

cohort was consistently around a third, and this group was included in the PRU's statistics because they

were registered with the PRU. Because they did not sit GCSEs and their attendance was also low, as shown

in the next section, they had quite a damaging impact on the PRU's overall performance as measured by

attainment (GCSEs) and attendance.

The first PRU students to sit GCSE exams were the 2009/10 Year 11 cohort. There were 62 students on roll but only 22 achieved any results (Fig. 18). Of the remaining 40, some did not turn up for their exams, some were disqualified for malpractice (talking, turning round, leaving too early) and some just could not answer the questions or complete the coursework.   Four students performed better than expected and 17 underachieved against their predicted grades. The following year, 22 students out of 41 achieved results and, of these, one exceeded expectations, 14 missed their predicted grades and 6 matched their predicted grades.   The predicted grades for the first cohort were made by staff in conflict with the establishment and were based on teachers' intuition, whilst the second year's predictions used prior attainment data and monitoring evidence to inform estimates and were therefore considered to be more accurate.

	Number of students with results	Shown as % age of cohort
■ 09/10 Yr 11	22	35.48
■ 10/11 Yr 11	22	53.65
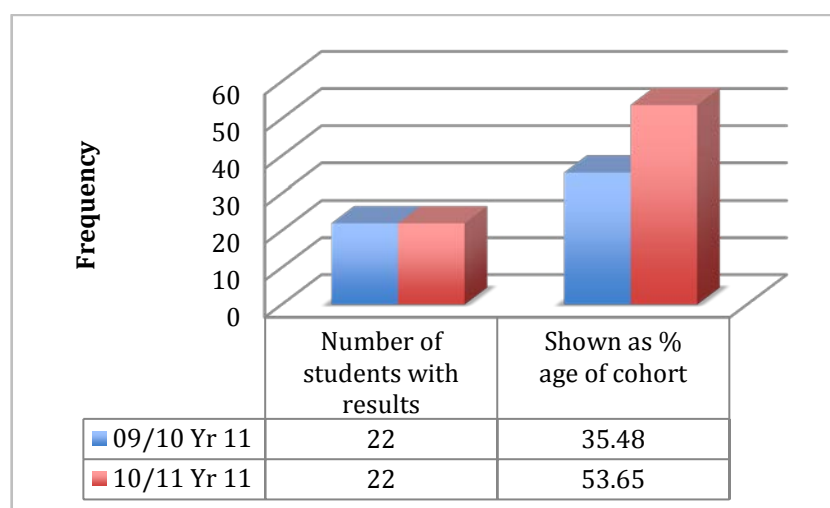
Fig. 18   GCSE Successes Overall

The grades achieved by the two cohorts showed marked differences, as shown in Fig. 19:
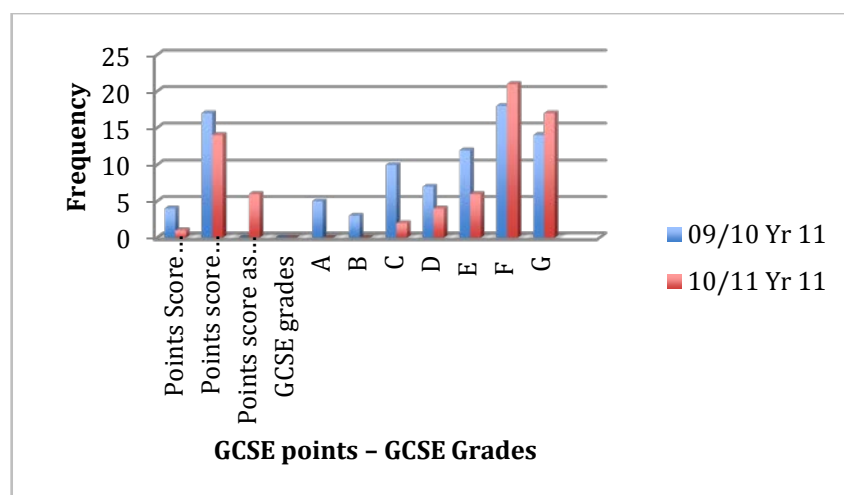
Fig. 19 GCSE Performance – distribution of grades by cohort

From this information, the first year's PRU cohort was interpreted as academically much stronger of the two, although proportionally fewer achieved GCSE success. More of the 09/10 cohort continued to make progress at Key Stage 3 than the 10/11 cohort, indicating that prior learning was more secure. All students in the 2011/12 cohort made some progression between Key Stages 1 and 2. Between Key Stages 2 and 3, though, there was more stalling and regression than the previous year's students, making the change starker.

Inspection placed more emphasis on actual attainment progress over time. This proved difficult to determine initially because the information on new students was so weak. The prior data gave a sense of what could be achieved if learning progressed at expected levels, but the disengagement and disaffection of students coming to the PRU distorted that perception. If the PRU was to make any sense of the impact it was making on learning, it needed to be able to benchmark on entry and track assessments over time. Each subject had different assessment approaches that suited the demands of the subject; students generally did not value tests, and, either by choice or design, did not do well in them. The PRU looked at various options to assess learning levels at entry and track performance over time, and finally decided on a software package known as 'bksb'. Using this web-based application, students were able to do the assessment and get immediate feedback on how they had done. It also contains a diagnostic element, which indicated gaps in learning, and this was helpful to teachers in their lesson planning. Using this software package with both

2011/12 cohorts, we were able to monitor progression by sub-level, and this was extremely important because: a) we were able to track and celebrate the small steps in improvement that the students were making; and b) this feedback became motivational. Three sub-levels were equivalent to one national curriculum level, and from the following charts it can be demonstrated that some students had been making outstanding progress since joining the PRU, particularly in English, and that most made some progress. Three 'persistent absentee' students in the Year 11 cohort had disengaged with the core subjects.
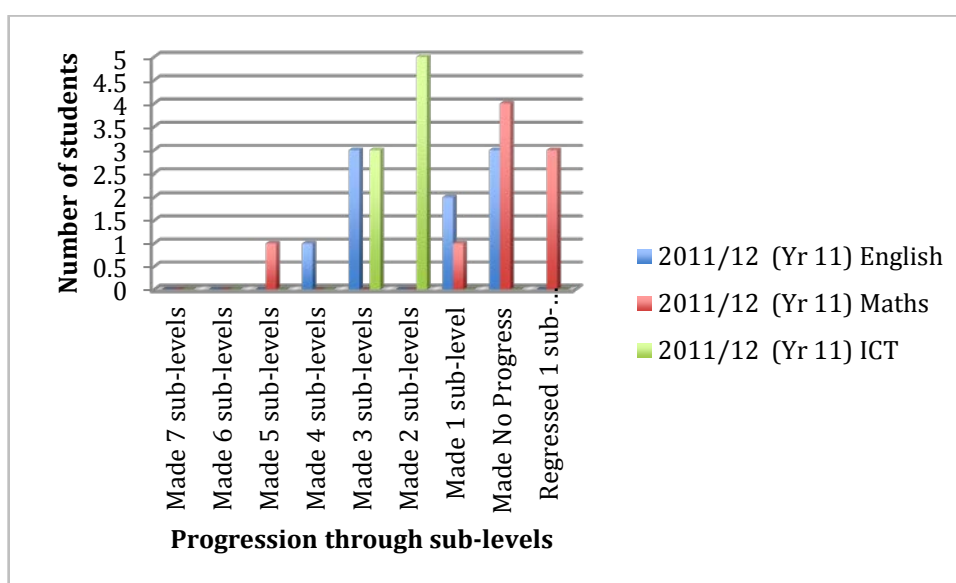
Fig. 20 Progress from baseline assessment on entry 2011/12 Yr. 11
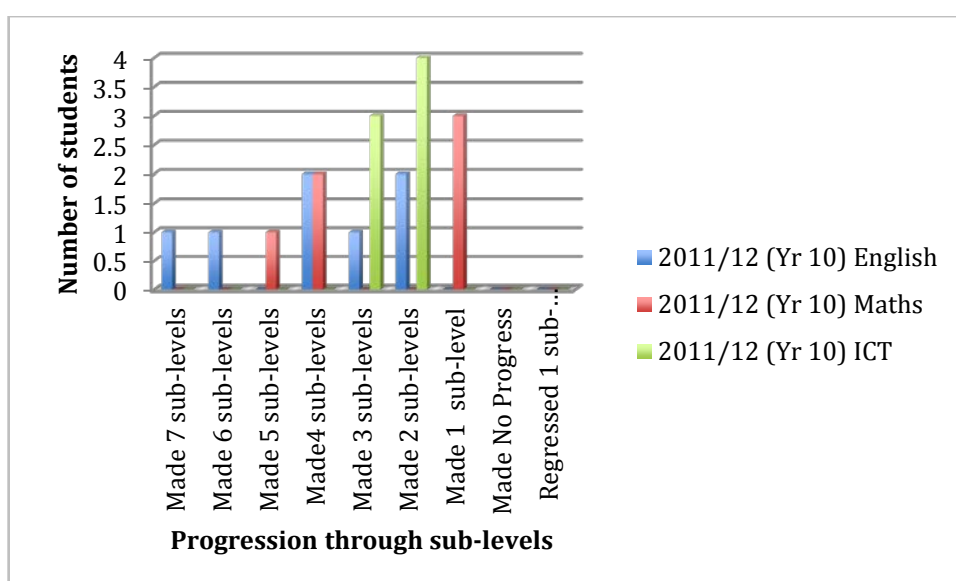
Fig. 21 Progression from baseline assessment on entry 2011/12 Yr. 10

Attendance

As with the learning profiles, attendance levels were also erratic, and a true picture of attendance for part-time placements proved difficult to record using CMIS. As a result, the data used was generated internally by recording the actual attendance in relation to the amount of provision the student was allocated and disregarding 'lates'. For example, if a medical student was allocated ten hours of learning a week and attended all sessions, they achieved 100% attendance; but on CMIS it would be shown as 40% (a proportion of the expected 25 hours) and is demotivating. Therefore, two attendance databases were maintained and we were quite open about this when we were inspected because we were demonstrating very tight monitoring procedures.

Attendance levels prior to placement were difficult to establish, but through diligence and tenacity, we pieced together a benchmark figure for comparisons, as shown in the following table:

	%age of students showing improvement in attendance	%age of students showing deterioration in attendance
09/10 (Yr. 11)	No prior data	No prior data
10/11 (Yr. 11)	41.46	9.75
11/12 (Yr. 11)	31.03	37.93
11/12 (Yr. 10)	35	30

Table 4. Improving and deteriorating attendance levels in three cohorts

Using this data, we established that, overall, some students' attendance improved and some deteriorated, but through detailed analysis we were able to identify which students they were and target our interventions accordingly.

Attendance was recorded daily and trends were shared with staff, who shared any intelligence they had gathered on the students. Four sets of parents/carers were taken to court and fined during 2011/12 for non-attendance. We knew from our internal intelligence that some families colluded with their children over non-attendance. Others simply took a day or more off because they did not fear repercussions. For some, attendance was not easy: catching two buses each way was tedious. Bus passes were provided, with the bonus that they could be used at weekends and during out-of-school hours. Weekly attendance was

erratic, but most students attended each week, if not every day. A small group of non-attenders had a striking impact on the overall attendance levels. For the spasmodic attenders, there was no discernable pattern; absence appeared to be random and was often impulsive.   Students who attended the PRU had better attendance levels than those on AP (Fig. 22). Interestingly, the students on AP already had reduced hours, and therefore poor attendance coupled with reduced hours was especially detrimental. Very few students from either the PRU or AP maintained attendance levels above the 'persistent absence' threshold (85%) or even achieved the OFSTED 'satisfactory' threshold of 92%.   Year 11 students had better attendance levels than the Year 10 students at the PRU, whereas the situation was reversed for those on Alternative Provision. This was quite possibly because a large number of the Year 10 students had transferred from the KS3 PRU at the same time, where they had been together for almost a year or more, transferring with the confidence of an established group and bringing with them established patterns of behaviour and poor attendance.

Lateness and post-registration truancy were also problematic.   Both impacted on learning and added to the frustration of teachers who had worked hard to prepare lessons matched to the students' academic needs and interests – where they could be identified.   Both issues were regarded as internal disciplinary matters, but there were no workable sanctions to enforce punctuality and attendance after registration. The students had to 'buy' into the PRU, and that was a real challenge for curriculum modelling and curriculum development. In this matter, students were exercising control over their own time; they knew that they would be pursued through the courts for non-attendance so they attended and then played games by being late to lessons or truanting. Missing lessons either by not attending, truanting or disruption therefore has an impact on the acquisition of 'capitals', in the same way that Bourdieu described for language skills, and works to maintain social positioning within a reduced field of the peer group.
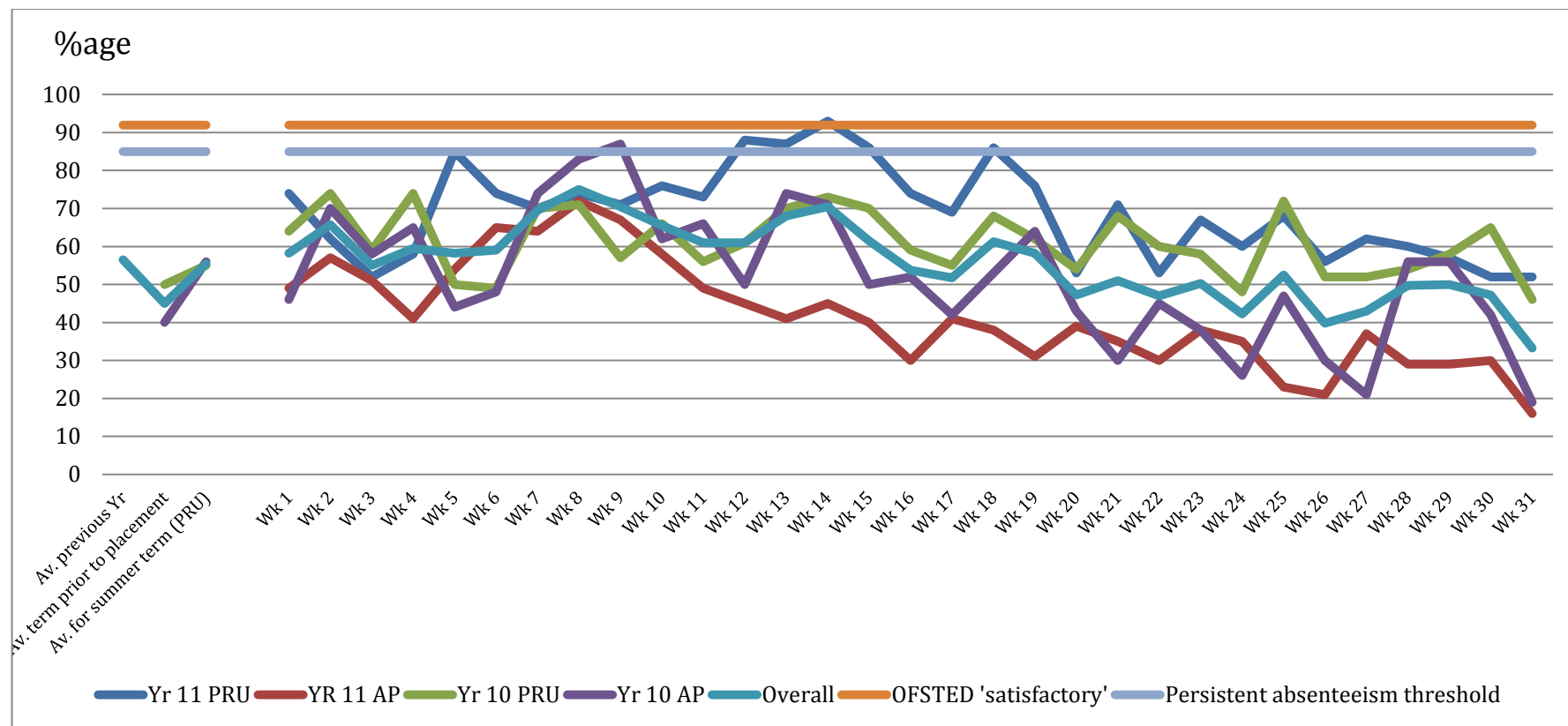
Fig. 22 Average attendance over a 31-week period for all students on roll, showing outcomes in relation to national thresholds for the 2011/12 cohorts

Exclusions

The majority of students who were referred to the PRU had either been permanently excluded (Pex) from mainstream schools or were at risk of being excluded, and were placed through the Fair Access Panel (FAP) protocols (Fig. 23).

	09/10 (Yr 11)	10/11 (Yr 11)	11/12 (Yr11)	11/12 (Yr10)
■ % of cohort placed at the PRU through exclusion	29.03	26.82	31.03	30
■ % of cohort with Pex including those with exclusions but placed through FAP	59.67	41.46	0	0
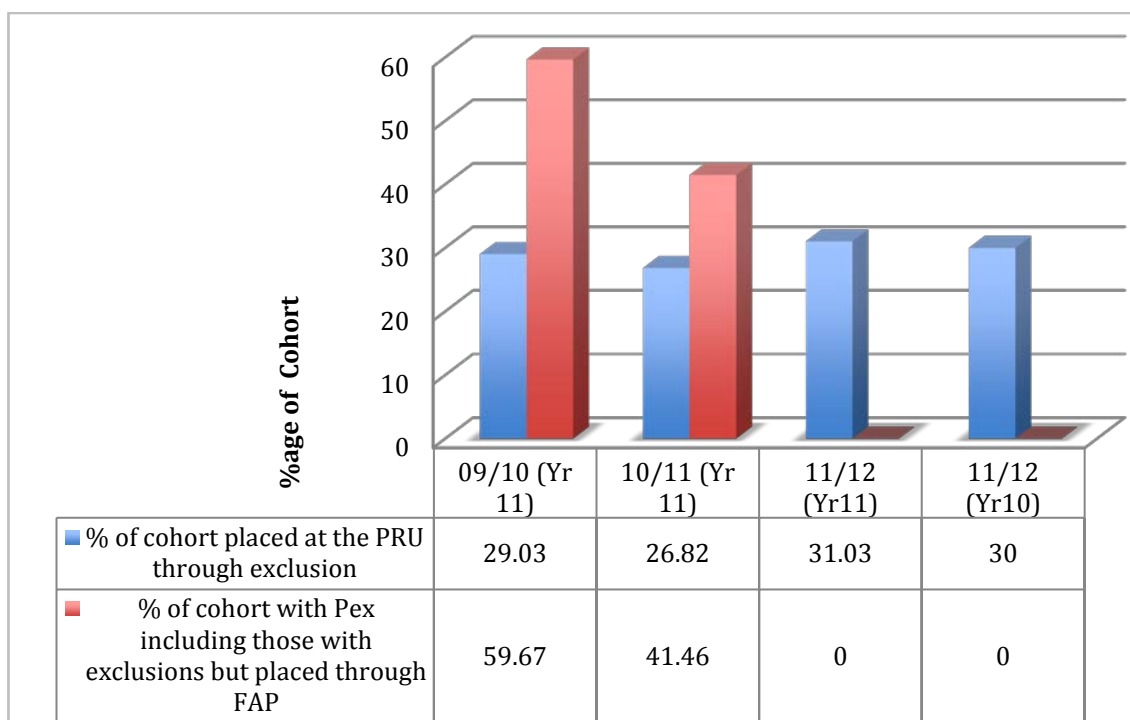
Fig. 23 Placements through exclusion

The permanently excluded students were straightforward to identify, but there were other students who were placed through the FAP protocols who had been permanently excluded before a managed move to the PRU. Consequently, the number of students overall who had experienced permanent exclusion was higher than those referred to the PRU through permanent exclusion. The age when first excluded ranged from 8 years old to 16 years old, as shown in Fig. 24.

	8 Yrs	9 Yrs	10 Yrs	11 Yrs	12 Yrs	13 Yrs	14 Yrs	15 Yrs	16 Yrs
09/10 (Yr. 11)	0	0	0	0	11	14	9	2	1
10/11 (Yr. 11)	0	0	0	5	5	4	3	0	0
11/12 (Yr. 11)	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	0
11/12 (Yr. 10)	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	0
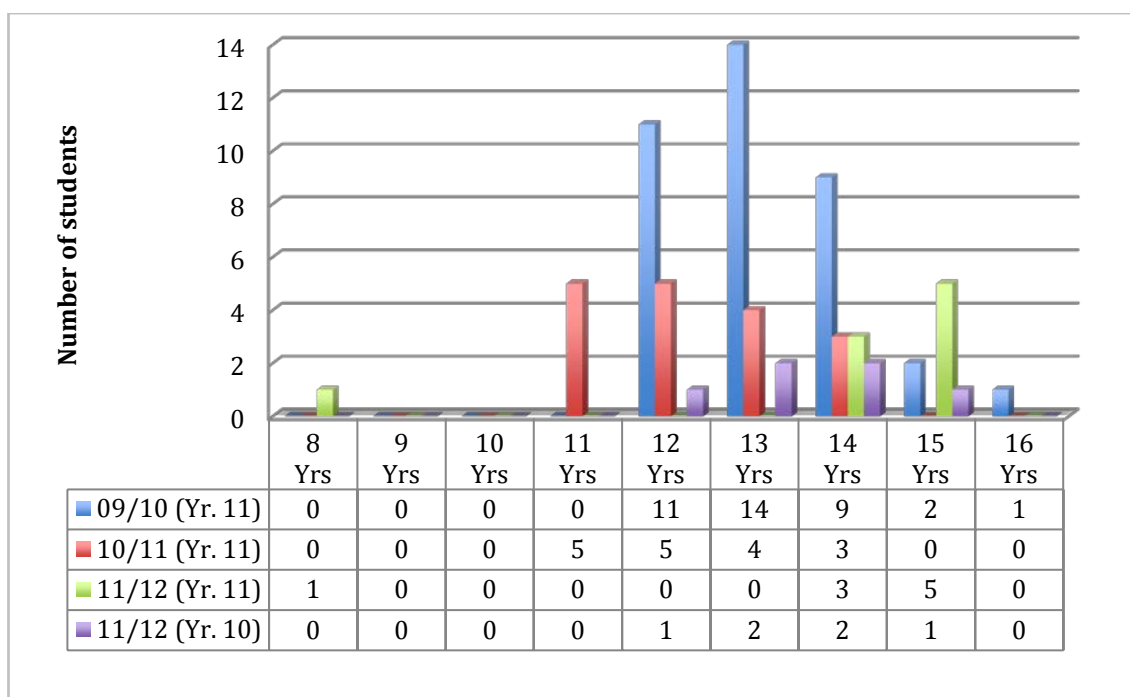
Fig. 24   Age when first excluded

The most common age for exclusion was 13, and this would fall in Year 8 or Year 9 depending on the date of birth. This appeared to coincide with the timing of the stalling and regression aspects identified in the progression rates earlier, indicating a clear connection. Most exclusions were because of confrontations or conflict with adults (see Fig. 25) rather than conflict with other students, and these are similarly proportioned.   However, the third most frequent category for exclusion was 'persistent disruptive behaviour', which is also a conflict issue between adults and students over classroom discipline; and in combining non-compliant behaviour with verbal and physical altercations with adults, there is a definite pattern of resistant behaviour towards authority and power/control issues. This is also exercised on a different level and to a slightly lesser extent with other students, where domination (bullying) is the pattern. Within the PRU setting, this pattern of behaviour was continued to the extent that some students deliberately tried to intimidate staff, and this led me to believe that some students possessed more social prestige in the classroom than their teachers and manipulated this influence to increase their standing among their peers (agency), thus trading-off behaviour for concessions in learning and rewards from staff. In this way, they increased their kudos and established a particular kind of daring image by investing in disruptive behaviour.

	Physical assault: pupil	Physical assault: adult	Persistent disruptive	Verbal/ threatening to : adult	Verbal/ threatening to: pupil	Damage	Other
09/10 (Yr. 11)	16.12	3.22	12.9	14.51	1.61	1.61	9.67
10/11 (Yr. 11)	14.63	0	4.87	9.75	4.87	2.43	4.87
11/12 (Yr. 11)	0	0	6.89	13.79	0	0	3.44
11/12 (Yr. 10)	5	5	10	0	0	0	10
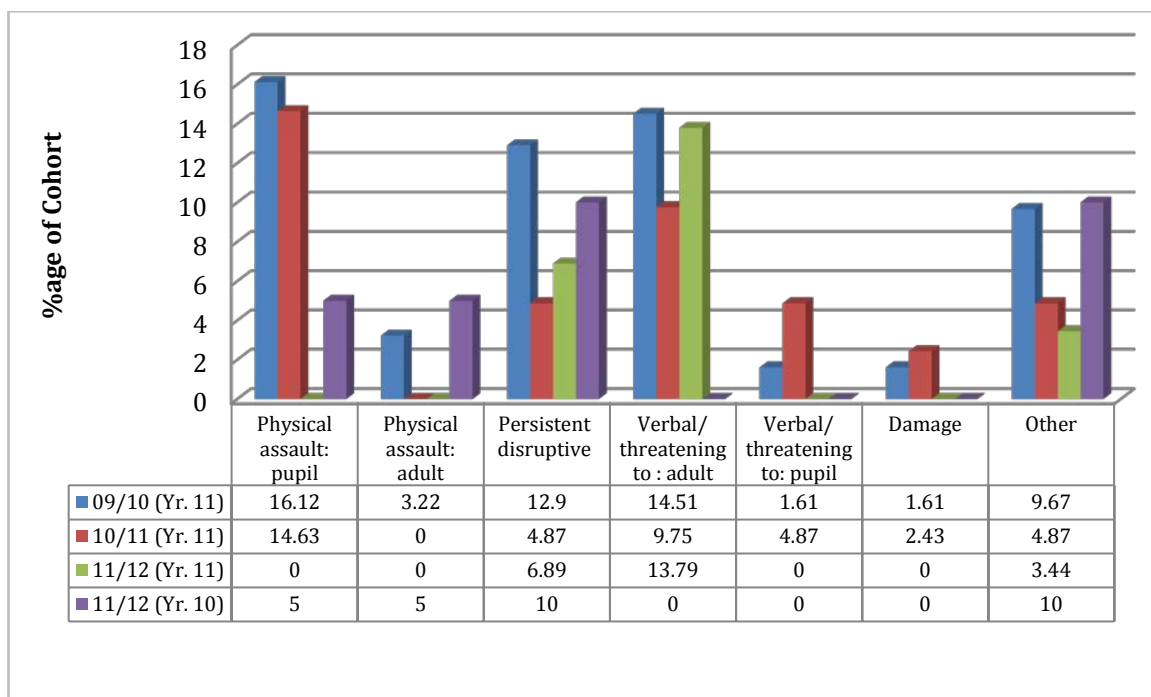
Fig. 25   Reasons for exclusion

Contacts with the police

The police gather intelligence about adults, children and young people by the direct involvement of officers and detectives, 'Crimestoppers', and Community Support Officers. They represent authority in the community. Information is held on a central database that provides details of the incidents, determining whether the involved were victims, witnesses or perpetrators or were known through association with known criminals or gangs. The police data provided a picture of the behaviours of the PRU students in their neighbourhoods and communities. Some had committed crimes and were referred to the YOS for corrective interventions, and others at risk of offending were referred to the YOS's prevention scheme, YISP. Each year, I checked which students were known to the police, and for the target groups the following picture emerged, as set out in Fig. 26:

	09/10 (Yr. 11)	10/11 (Yr. 11)	11/12 (Yr. 11)	11/12 (Yr. 10)
%age of cohort known to the police	59.67	70.04	72.41	95
%age of cohort known to YOS	17.74	2.43	4.87	15
% of cohort known to YISP	16.12	29.26		
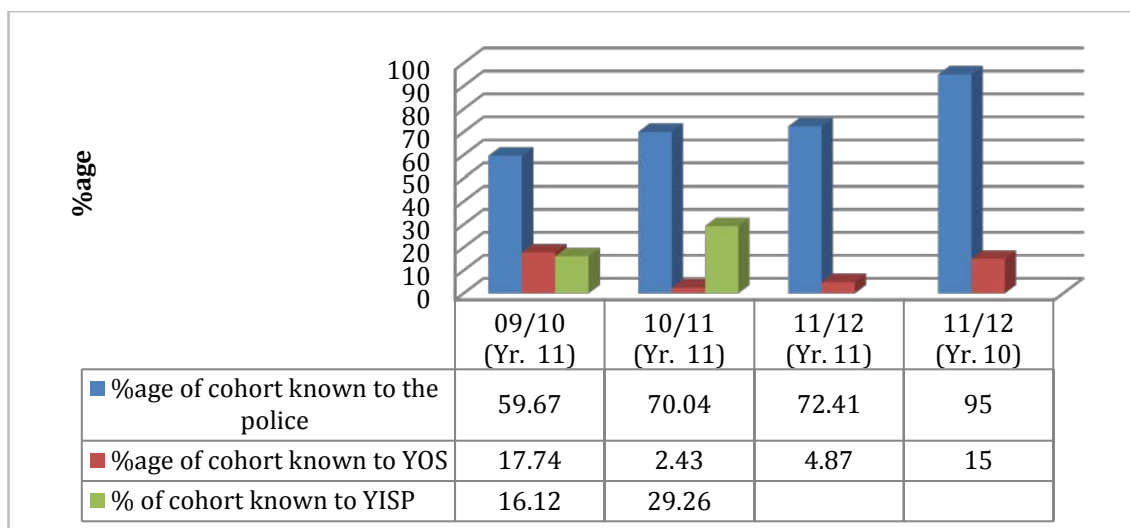
Fig. 26 Percentage of students known to the police

The data showed that, proportional to the cohort, the number of PRU students who were known to the police was rising and represented a significant proportion of the PRU population. In some instances, a student would only have had one encounter with the police, and this could have been as a witness or victim. Increasingly, though, more students were experiencing multiple encounters where they may well have been a victim or a witness, but where multiple encounters existed, they crossed over into acts of violence and antisocial behaviour.

	09/10 (Yr. 11)	10/11 (Yr. 11)	11/12 (Yr. 11)	11/12 (Yr. 10)
Percentage of Yr. group with multiple encounters with police	22.58	56.09	41.37	70
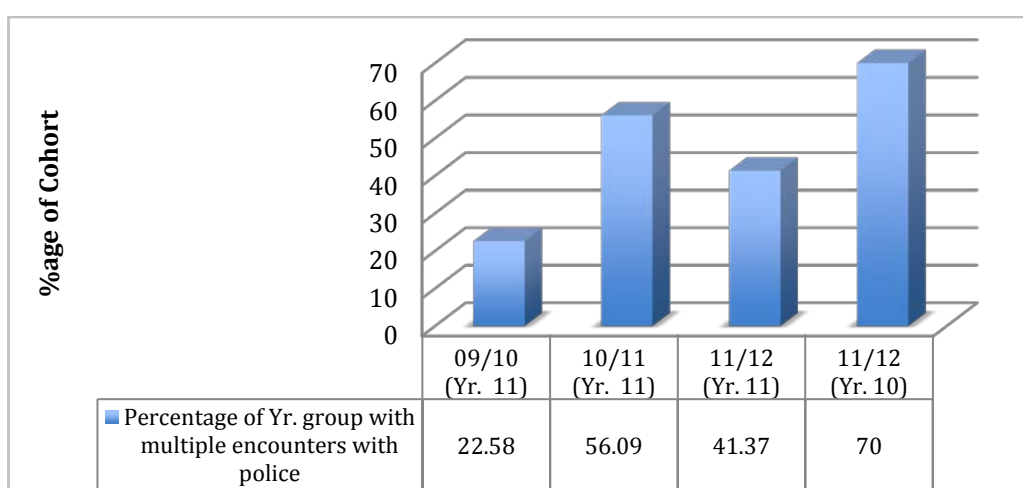
Fig. 27 Percentage of students in each cohort to have multiple encounters with the police

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I summarised these encounters into broad categories and established how many students featured, through their behaviour, in each category, and this is shown in the following chart (Fig. 28):
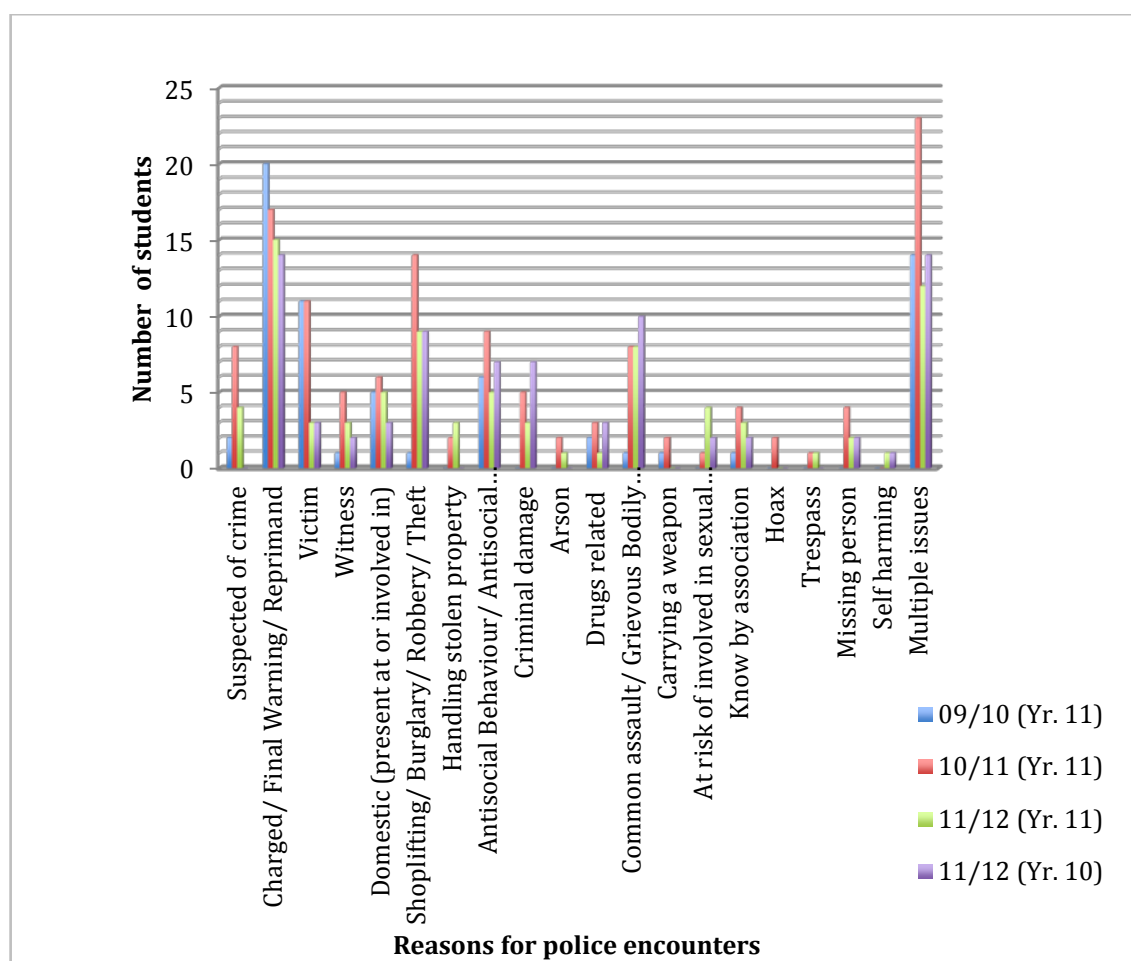
Fig. 28 An illustration of the types of activities and the frequency of involvement with the police by the student cohort.

Stealing from others, as in shoplifting, robbery, burglary and theft, was the most common activity involving PRU students. The next most common activity was around physically harming others, such as common assault, causing grievous bodily harm and actual bodily harm. This range of activities was closely followed by antisocial behaviour in the community, such as harassment; fighting; causing an affray and general nuisance; and criminal damage. Antisocial behaviour, nuisance behaviour, assaulting or threatening others and showing disregard for what others have chimed with the reasons for which students were being excluded. This indicated that the behaviours in school were possibly a symptom of what was going on in their homes and communities, where they spent most of their time (even when they should have been in school).

Indications of low economic capital

To try and establish where students were in relation to poverty, I used the free school meals data. This was census and Ofsted pre-inspection data and therefore routinely available. In addition, I accessed the 2007 IMD data through the local authority's policy and performance team. Postcode data was used to place the neighbourhood in a nationally ranked scale of deprivation, using housing, employment and benefits data. The scale is broken up into ten percentile groups and is best shown in graphical form (Fig. 29), where it is clearly evident that an increasing number of students came from increasingly poor neighbourhoods. Interestingly, not all students living in the 0–10% of the most deprived neighbourhoods nationally were eligible for free school meals. This opened up another debate on how eligibility was determined: do all who are actually eligible apply for FSM, and if they are eligible and apply, do students actually take them? Therefore using free school meals as an indicator of poverty is flawed.
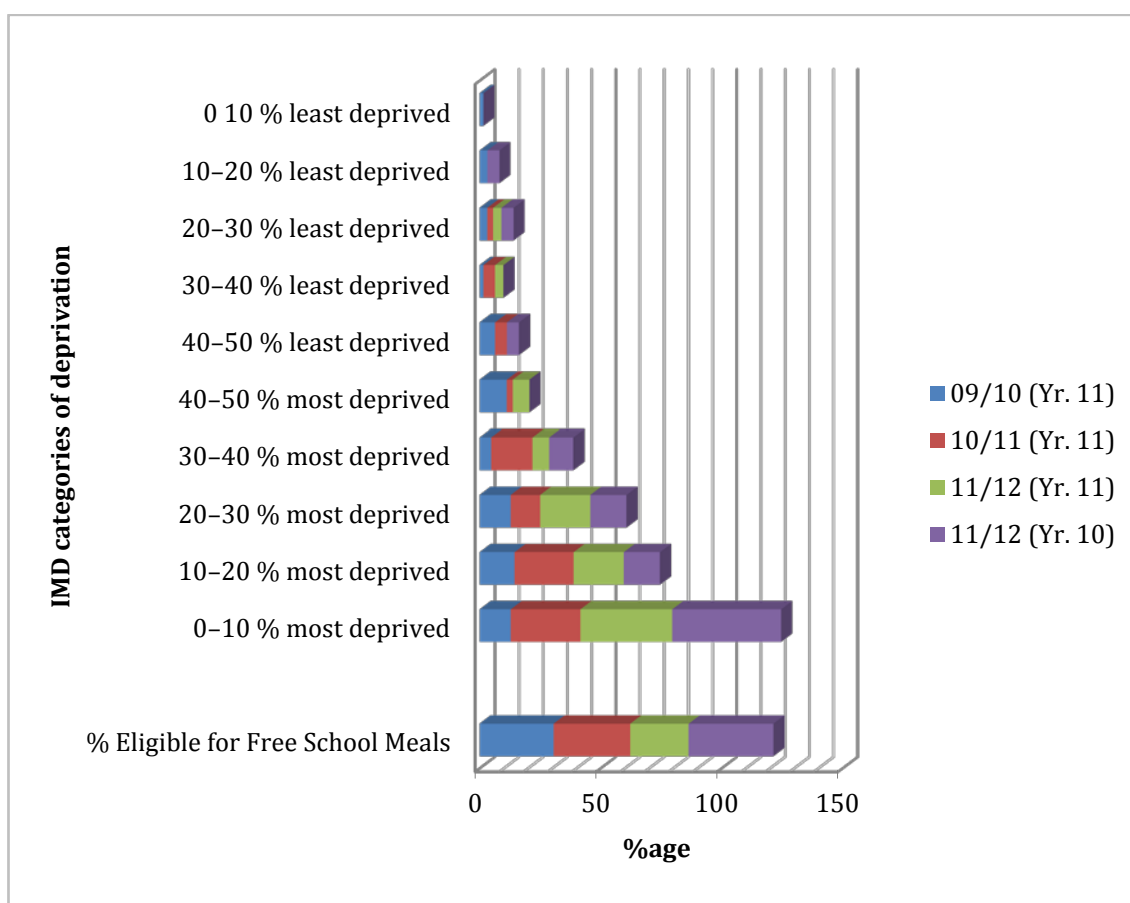
Fig. 29 How the PRU students are placed in the deprivation rankings according to their family home postcodes

Having established where our students were in terms of attainment, attendance, exclusions, encounters with police and poverty, it was time to consider the relationship between poverty and police intelligence and between poverty, police intelligence and education. To do this, I selected those students in each cohort who had a record of multiple encounters with the police and called this the Focus Group. Again, there is a 'health warning' to be given here, because the sample size was too small for any conclusions to be safely applied to the national PRU and AP populations; the encounters with the police were not necessarily offending behaviour; and the poverty indicators did not necessarily mean that all families in deprived neighbourhoods were without affluence. Nonetheless, the outcomes may generate interest for a larger-scale study in the future.

A relationship between police, socio-economic deprivation and educational attainment

By extracting those students from the different cohorts who had had multiple encounters with the police and matching the list with the IMD through postcodes, the following picture emerges (Fig. 30):

	10% most deprived	10–20 % most deprived	20–30 % most deprived	30–40 % most deprived	least
■ 09/10 (Yr. 11)	2	4	1	2	0
■ 10/11 (Yr. 11)	7	6	5	3	1
■ 11/12 (Yr. 11)	5	1	5	1	0
■ 11/12 (Yr. 10)	7	2	3	2	0
■ Total	21	13	14	8	1
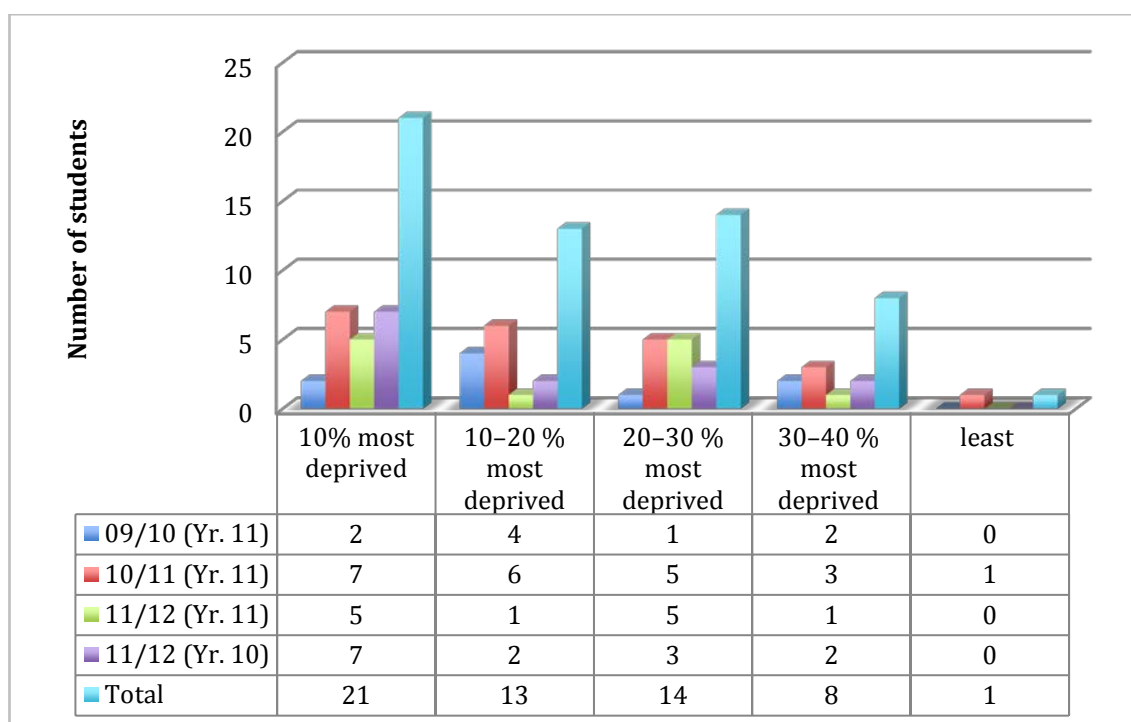
Fig. 30 A comparison of the number of students with multiple encounters with the police and the sections of the community they lived in

This (Fig. 30) demonstrated that the police were dealing with and had knowledge of more students from the more deprived communities and that the proportion of students in the PRU who were in these groups was increasing. That was not to say more were involved in offending, because I had not differentiated the encounters in that way, and, as pointed out previously, the police often provided support to families in crisis. Indeed, when gathering this information, one police officer told me that they were very often called to 'referee domestics' when family squabbles had become fights and the police were called to intervene. As a result, the police gathered extensive information about social issues and the vulnerabilities of children and their families. However, from the data shown in Fig. 28, we know that those multiple issues included some very high-end offending behaviour, such as assaults and attacks on others, which had been committed by PRU students.

The next stage was to marry up the Focus Groups with the attainment data and explore how well these students did compared to the rest of the PRU population. To do this, I revisited the national curriculum progression data and extrapolated the data for the Focus Groups for comparison. I looked at the GCSE achievement for the first two cohorts and made comparisons, and I also did this for those students in the Focus Groups who had achieved national curriculum level 5 or above, either in KS2 or KS3, and this information is shown in the following series of charts (Figs. 31–34).

In the 2009/10 Focus Group, the students tended to perform less well in the core subjects between the key stages. In the following three cohorts, the performance of each Focus Group was very similar to that of the cohort and regression was not significantly different either.

	All English KS1>2	Focus Group English KS1>3	All maths KS1>2	Focus Group maths KS1>3	All science KS1>2	Focus Group science KS1>3	All English KS2>3	Focus Group English KS2>4	All maths KS2>3	Focus group maths KS2>4	All science KS2>3	Focus Group science KS2>4
Made 3 Levels	4.84	1.61	4.84	1.61	16.13	6.45	1.61	0	1.61	0	0	0
Made 2 Levels	32.26	9.67	20.97	11.29	29.03	6.45	1.61	0	8.06	1.61	3.23	0
Made 1 Level	24.19	6.45	37.1	4.83	17.74	1.61	16.13	6.45	17.74	4.83	16.13	1.61
Made No Progress	1.61	0	0	0	0	0	9.68	3.22	16.13	4.83	20.97	4.83
Regressed	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.61	1.61	1.61	1.61	8.06	6.45

Fig. 31 Comparison of key stage progression rates for the 09/10 Yr. 11 Focus Group with the overall cohort for English, maths and science

	All English KS1>2	Focus Group English KS1>3	All maths KS1>2	Focus Group maths KS1>3	All science KS1>2	Focus Group science KS1>3	All English KS2>3	Focus Group English KS2>4	All maths KS2>3	Focus group maths KS2>4	All science KS2>3	Focus Group science KS2>4
Made 3 Levels	4.88	0	7.32	4.87	12.2	9.75	0	0	0	0	0	0
Made 2 Levels	41.46	43.9	35.59	41.46	51.22	53.65	0	0	14.63	12.19	4.88	9.75
Made 1 Level	29.27	41.46	39.02	41.46	14.63	19.51	17.07	17.07	9.96	12.19	17.07	14.63
Made No Progress	2.44	0	0	0	0	0	29.27	31.7	19.51	17.07	24.39	21.95
Regressed	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.44	2.43	7.32	9.75	4.88	4.87

Fig. 32 Comparison of key stage progression rates for the 10/11 Yr. 11 Focus Group with the overall cohort for English, maths and science

	All English KS1>2	Focus Group English KS1>3	All maths KS1>2	Focus Group maths KS1>3	All science KS1>2	Focus Group science KS1>3	All English KS2>3	Focus Group English KS2>4	All maths KS2>3	Focus group maths KS2>4	All science KS2>3	Focus Group science KS2>4
Made 3 Levels	13.79	13.79	6.89	6.89	20.68	20.68	0	0	0	0	0	0
Made 2 Levels	37.93	34.48	44.82	41.37	34.48	34.48	3.44	0	0	0	3.44	3.44
Made 1 Level	17.24	24.13	17.24	17.24	13.79	13.79	3.44	6.89	13.79	10.34	10.34	10.34
Made No Progress	0	0	0	0	0	0	13.79	17.24	13.79	13.79	6.89	6.89
Regressed	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.89	3.44	0	3.44	3.44	3.44

Fig. 33 Comparison of key stage progression rates for the 11/12 Yr. 11 Focus Group with the overall cohort for English, maths and science

	All English KS1>2	Focus Group English KS1>3	All maths KS1>2	Focus Group maths KS1>3	All science KS1>2	Focus Group science KS1>3	All English KS2>3	Focus Group English KS2>4	All maths KS2>3	Focus group maths KS2>4	All science KS2>3	Focus Group science KS2>4
■ Made 3 Levels	0	0	5	5	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
■ Made 2 Levels	20	20	15	15	25	25	0	0	0	0	0	5
■ Made 1 Level	20	20	25	25	15	15	5	5	10	10	15	10
■ Made No Progress	10	10	5	5	5	5	10	10	5	5	0	0
■ Regressed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
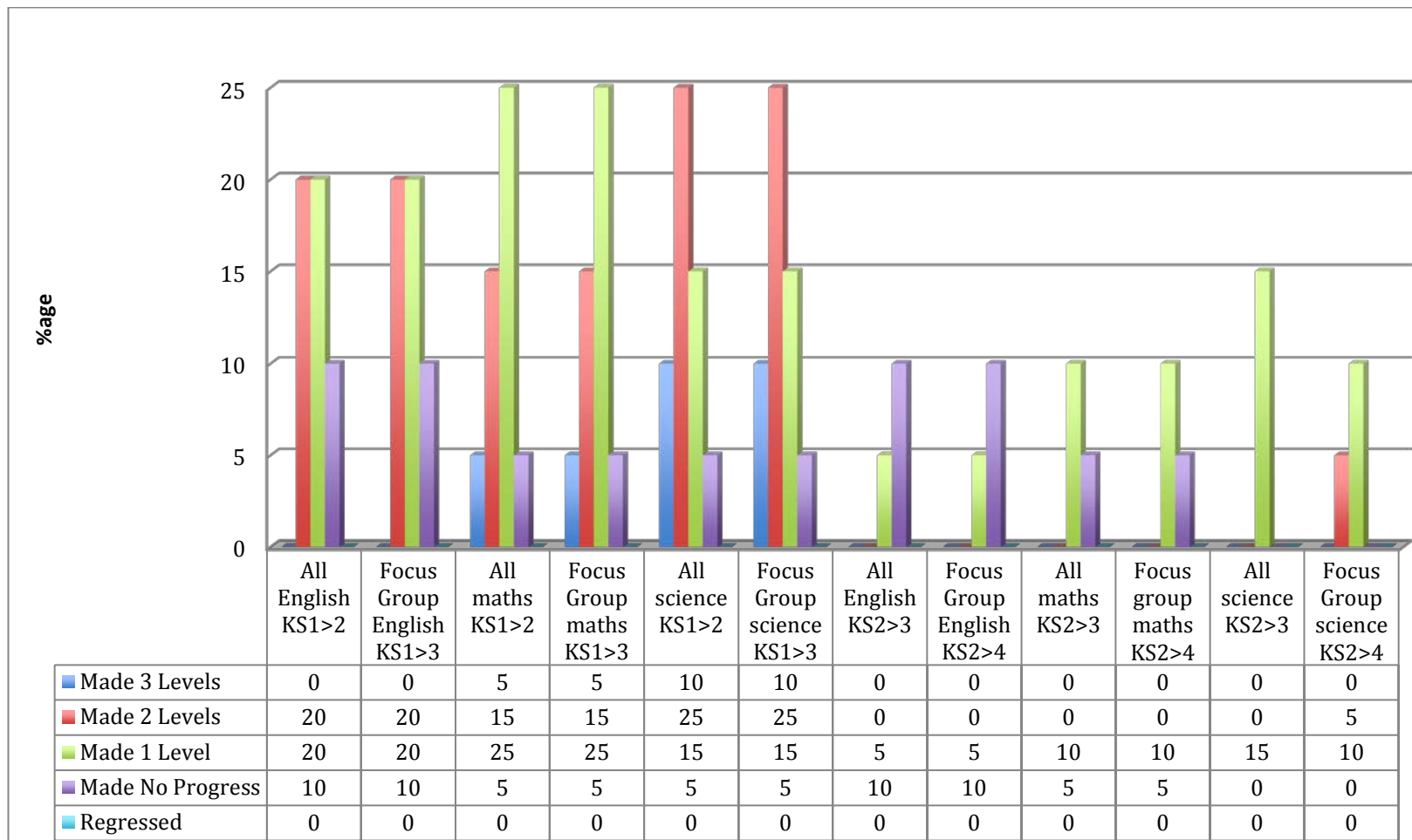
Fig. 34 Comparison of key stage progression rates for the 11/12 Yr. 10 Focus Group with the overall cohort for English, maths and science

As the attainment of students in each Focus Group was fairly consistent with that of the whole group, I decided to look more closely at the more academically able students, that is, those who achieved national curriculum level 5 or better. From the chart below (Fig. 35), we can see that the proportion of students with higher academic levels of those students with multiple encounters with the police increased steadily for the first three cohorts and dipped for the current Year 10 students. The data suggested that the 2011/12 Year 11 cohort was generally academically stronger, although the Year 10 cohort made slower progress for longer.

	09/10 (Yr. 11)	10/11 (Yr. 11)	11/12 (Yr. 11)	11/12 (Yr. 10)
All	35.48	25.19	31.03	25
Focus Groups	6.45	14.63	31.03	10
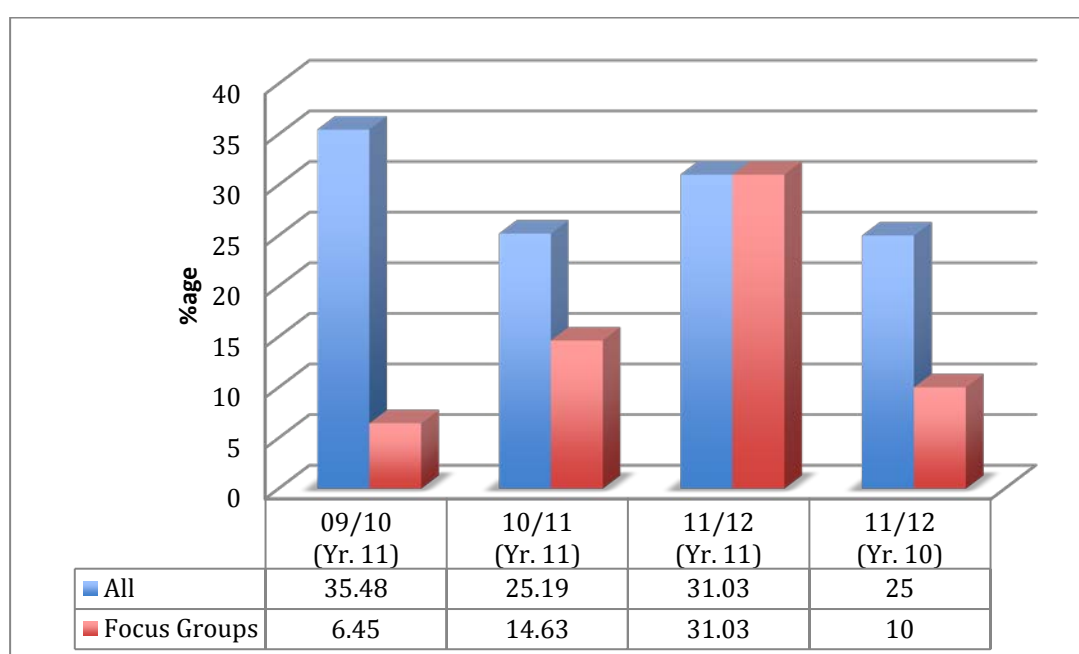
Fig. 35 Comparing %age of students achieving NC level 5 or above in one or more core subjects for all students with those in the Focus Groups

The GCSE performance of the Focus Groups compared to that of the whole cohort (Fig. 36) showed that the majority of PRU students were achieving in the lower grade ranges and that those students in the Focus Groups were doing less well than the rest.

	A - ALL	A - FG	B - ALL	B - FG	C - ALL	C - FG	D - ALL	D - FG	E - ALL	E - FG	F - ALL	F - FG	G - ALL	G - FG
■ 09/10 Yr 11	5	0	3	0	10	2	7	1	12	5	18	7	14	7
■ 10/11 Yr 11	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	3	6	5	21	4	17	2
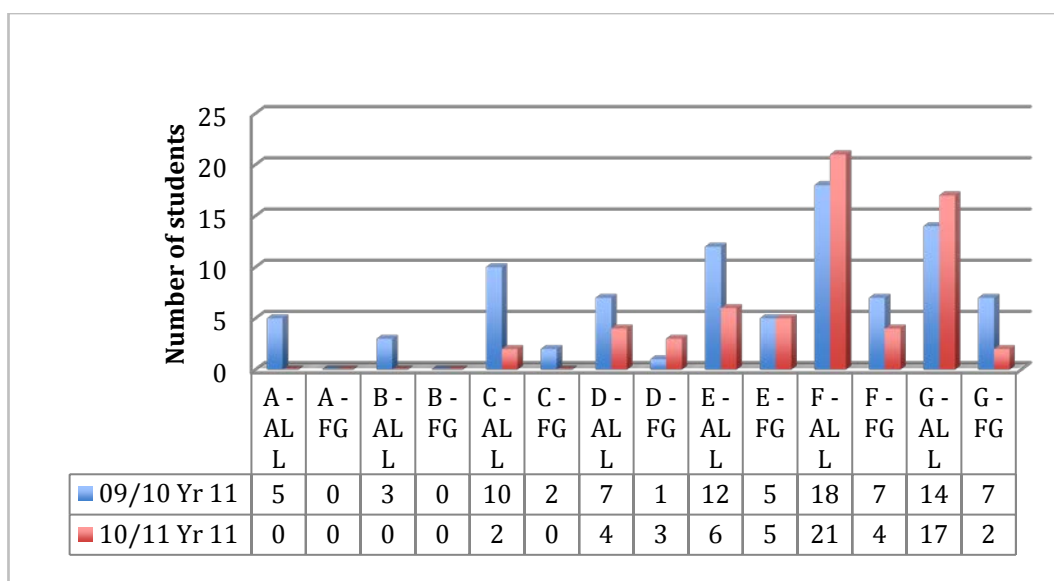
Fig. 36 GCSE performance of Focus Groups (FG) compared with all students in the cohort

Using the multiple deprivation indices, the students with multiple encounters with the police can be seen to be concentrated in the most deprived neighbourhoods (Fig. 37).
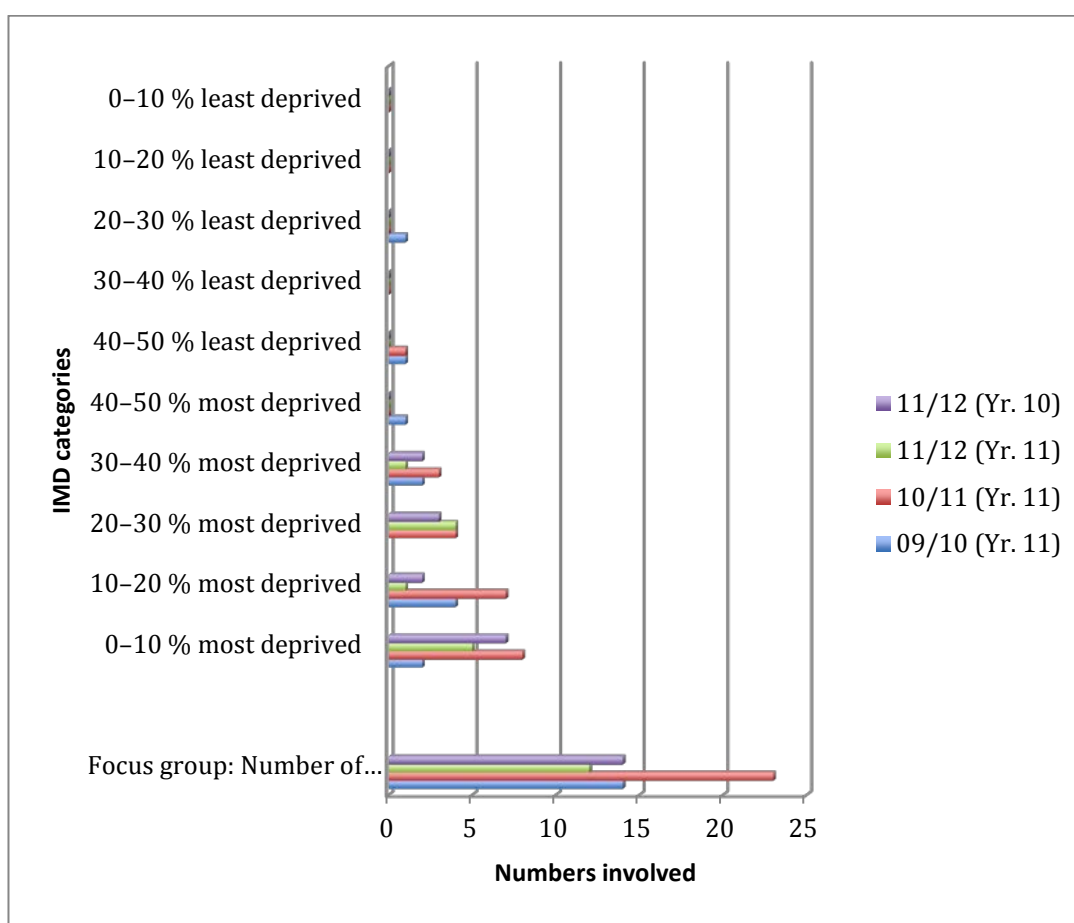
Fig. 37 Positioning of the Focus Groups within IMD categories

In summary, the statistical data illustrated that the attainment of PRU students on entry was generally well below national expectations, and that progress was stalling as early as KS2, particularly in English. Between KS2 and KS3, the levels of regression matched the rate of progression between KS1 and KS2, further compounding the difficulties in closing the achievement gaps between KS2 SATs and GCSEs. The students were placed at the PRU because their behaviours were limiting learning. This could have been because of incidents in or out of the classroom, which were often coupled with poor attendance, lateness and truancy, and carried over into the PRU. These behaviours were evident in the community, too, as shown by police intelligence. The most common features are to do with students attempting to take control of situations they were in, either through physical assault or threatening and intimidating behaviour towards other students and adults. Socially, they were positioned in some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the county and, through these three dimensions alone, these students were clearly very vulnerable and challenging young people and were – in terms of national expectations – underachieving.

Gender issues

Over the three-year period, the PRU had 150 students on roll, of which 98 were boys and 54 were girls (Fig. 13). The evidence has already demonstrated that underperformance is a predominant characteristic for all students and that they predominantly come from significantly deprived neighbourhoods. I decided to look further at the impact of gender on behaviour in the community as a possible indicator of cultural influences and used the police data for this purpose. I looked at how many students were known to the police (36 girls and 75 boys) and the reasons for that intelligence, as shown in Table 5 below.

Reasons students are known to police	Girls (36)	%age	Boys (75)	%age
Victim	18	50	10	13.3
Offending	22	61	50	66.7
Witness	6	16.7	11	14.7
Suspected	2	5.6	9	12
By association	1	2.8	2	2.7
Missing	1	2.8	1	1.3
Total	50	138.9	83	110.7

Table 5 The gendered differences of students known to the police by reason

In exploring this information further, I also discovered that significantly higher numbers of girls were known to the police than boys, mainly as victims, and that there was a strong correlation between those who were victims and offenders (16 girls were linked in this way as opposed to 3 boys). Sexual assault/exploitation was the main reason for their victim status, and these crimes did not feature in any of the boys' relationships with the police. The Violence against Women and Girls Crime Report (CPS 2012–2013) highlighted an increase in convictions nationally and also the alarming *volume* of violence against women and girls. The boys were more involved with offending behaviours and their victim status was usually related to issues of assault or theft. Giordano et al. (2006) stated that girls generally were less likely to become involved in criminal behaviour, mainly because they generally experienced higher levels of supervision in their upbringing and were socialised differently to boys, i.e. discouraged from risk-taking and assertive behaviour. This might also contribute to the reason why fewer girls than boys are excluded and go to PRUs. I felt that this resonated with Skeggs' view that certain behaviours and characteristics are inscripted on the self and are 'read' by others of a more predatory nature. That so many girls at the PRU were known as victims suggested that this imprinting begins very early, at a very formative stage in their development, and that the ability to 'read' these inscriptions also starts during formative stages too, and adds to the reproduction of cultural traits. Bullying and oppressive behaviour by some students towards others would add to the inscription process of both the bully and the victim and perpetuate the culture of dominant and submissive behaviours.

The quantitative data sources were fundamental in establishing the position of students in relation to national levels and expectations, in identifying them as vulnerable learners and in comparing their performance as a vulnerable group, within which were further vulnerable sub-groups. The national assessment frameworks of SATs and GCSEs were the main means of explaining and determining educational progress, and in the PRU, the educational attainment and progress of students fell below national expectations; this was consistent with this sector of education nationally. The vast majority of the 150 students started KS1 in line with national expectations and made expected progress towards KS2, at which point slippage became evident. The point here is that these were not pupils with additional unmet learning needs requiring SEN interventions. They were shown to be 'average' learners who disengaged for

one reason or another, and the quantitative data did not answer the question of 'why' they disengaged. The concern remains that for students from low socio-economic backgrounds who also underachieve, the potential to close the attainment gap and therefore increase economic, social and cultural capital diminishes, thus reinforcing social class positioning. The quantitative data also illustrates high levels of resistance to authority through absence and the frequency and incidents of school exclusion, and this is replicated in the community, as demonstrated by the police intelligence. By concentrating on the educational profiles of those students who are challenging in the community, the relationship between underperformance and resistance to authority becomes more significant as a cultural theme between class boundaries. Proportionally, the police knew more girls than boys, primarily for reasons relating to victimisation (safeguarding) and a local focus at the time on sexual exploitation, which is a cultural development that has emanated from a national focus on violence against women and girls. The quantitative data helps to illustrate the impact of class, culture and resistance on learning outcomes but does not explain it. In order to address that issue, the final research question was formulated: 'what do students have to say about their experiences of education?', and it is that to which I turn next.

The voices of participants and developing 'capital'

In this section I address the final research question: 'what do students have to say about their experiences of education?' in primary, secondary and the PRU environments. The question is primarily concerned with the dialogical engagement between the researcher (who was also their Head Teacher) and students, supplemented and contrasted with the views of their teachers and teaching assistants (who had the closest relationships with them in the PRU) as part of the validation exercises. The information was gathered through a series of meetings/interviews that followed a schedule of semi-structured questions, and a small sample of photographs was taken by students to reflect images of what represented their life outside school. (Samples of the questions used are located in Appendices H and I). I asked students what they thought about school (the curriculum and teachers in general); how they viewed their behaviours (what and why); the importance of friends and the views of their parents (self- and group identity); how they used their leisure time; what their parents thought; and about encounters with the police (relationships with authority figures in the home and community). I invited students to provide a nickname or similar to

disguise their identity, but they unanimously decided that was unnecessary and elected to be known by their first names: Jess, Ryan, Conor, Callum, Dan, Josh, Kyle, Gary and Chris.

Students' perceptions …

The students had mixed attitudes towards the curriculum, favouring art, English, PSHE and ICT, but they disliked maths and science, saying that this was because they did not like either the teachers or the repetition of work, and often this was traced back to their primary school experiences. As part of the planned research strategy, students were supplied with a camera to record features of their lives that were important to them. Some chose to photograph friends, family members and teachers (not displayed to protect anonymity) who were significant to them, and others captured images of the learning environment (Fig. 38). It was noted that the subject choice as I interpreted it was generally remote, deserted and damaged, and if this was how they perceived their world – desolate, devalued and impoverished – then they were reflecting life at the bottom end of the socio-economic gradient – the precarious working class, or the 'precariat' of society. However, the students may have made meaning of these spaces in different ways, such as believing that they generated a sense of freedom or of being unobserved because of a lack of surveillance. The photographs promoted some discussion, enabling 'voice' and discussion to surface.

Fig. 38 Students' images of where they learn

To demonstrate their resistance, they would avoid particular subjects (post-registration truancy) and some would be late to lessons, sometimes simply because they saw a daring opportunity that they could not resist. All the time, they knew that school sanctions were ineffective and enjoyed the entertainment they got from determining when they arrived at lessons in both the mainstream and the PRU environments. The worst that the PRU staff could do was to phone their parents and complain. They generally liked practical activities during which they could also chat with staff and other students, and they resented activities that involved writing a lot. When they were interested in the lesson, they did not appreciate other students' acting out behaviours. Some students appreciated smaller classes and that support staff could take the harder-working students out to complete work without disruption.

Fig. 39 Symbolic memento of a (deceased) baby sister

Three students said things started to go wrong in school with the loss of a close relative: '… Dad had died and I was in shut-down …' (Josh, 29.09.11); 'I got bullied about my little sister that's passed away … and I lost my temper…' (Fig. 39; Chris, 18.11.11); 'Teacher pissed about and laughed about my Granddad dying … I wasn't going to do any work 'cos I was upset … I just kicked off … ' (Gary, 06.10.11). In these instances, students used the symbolic attachment to their relatives as a reason for their behaviours and wove it into the fabric of their identity. Bullying was the driver for others, '… I got bullied … but then I retaliated like, badly …' (Conor, 18.11.11), and in turn they bullied and got into fights to stand up for themselves. Bullying, said one, caused him to threaten a teacher with a knife, and another said it had caused him to be violent towards other students and threatening to teachers. Two said they were naughty as small children and did not really know why, but one said it coincided with a move into larger classes. Ryan was tasked to mow the school playing fields. He said that '… it was the same stuff every day … we'd been doin' it for six weeks … I

know how to use one [lawnmower]. An' I just thought: all right, I'll put a pattern in the grass …' (paired interview, 20.05.11); the pattern was a gigantic penis, and Ryan's actions resulted in exclusion. Another thought it was because outside issues were brought into the school, resulting in her setting fire to the school toilets under the influence of drugs.

… about teachers

The students had a lot to say about teachers, and below are a few selected extracts to illustrate this:

Dan   '… in some areas they do know better about you, but then again in some things they … so they can't be better than you all the time … 'cos I know some things that they don't … you should listen to everybody really instead of thinking that because you're a teacher you know better.' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)

Jess   ' … I think we should listen to teachers but I think teachers should listen to us, because they can learn from us and we can learn from them and I think that's what school's all about really.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Ryan   'Different methods of teaching can keep your mind occupied which means you're not going to get into trouble.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Callum   '… sometimes they [teachers] are just stubborn and think they know it all, but they don't and at other times they are actually right.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

Ryan   '… you say something but because the teacher is a teacher, what they say goes. But even when you are right, they try and prove it wrong … we know stuff that they don't know, but they know a lot more stuff that we don't know.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Jess   '… [school is] … a place where they put us to go and learn what we don't want to … I used to think … I hate you … but now I see they are helping me sort my life out for me, helping me learn things I need to know in my life.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Chris   '… [teacher] she doesn't explain at all … sometimes she does, yeah. But in the past few lessons … she just tells us what like we got to do, she says get out the book and she don't explain how to do it …' (Paired interview, 18.11.11)

Conor   'Well, she does. She like goes through it on the board' (Paired interview, 18.11.11)

Chris   'Yeah, but …'

Conor   'When it comes down to it … 'cos she keeps talkin' and talkin' when people are playing up … you just lose that focus of what you got to try and do. Then you ask her when people are playing up, that's when she goes off the … grumpy.' (Paired interview, 18.11.11)

Jess   ' … I regret 'avin' a go at [teacher] especially 'cos she worked so hard to get me in a good frame of mind, but sometimes though, it's not all showing off. Sometimes, you do 'ave a really shit day. Like, if I come into maths like the other day. I cried

my eyes out because something was too hard for me, an' I think I just got stressed and felt I'm in this school [the PRU] because I'm shit blah, blah, blah. I took it out on the teacher and then when I sat down with [TA] and she was like "It's fine." I don't know how to explain it, it's just sometimes you have a bad day or, 'cos there's like kids who smoke, it's like if you haven't had a fag … or you've had a weekend of really getting wrecked and you feel like shit on a Monday morning. It just depends, really.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

All students thought teachers knew best about some things but not everything and that specialist knowledge did not guarantee that teachers were better people.   Kyle and Josh talked about teachers who had blamed them for things their older brothers did; Kyle frequently referred back to being sworn at by a teacher for no apparent reason and felt much maligned because when he swore back and left the room, he was excluded.   After a difficult period at home and school, Josh became particularly angry at the insensitivity of his Head Teacher, who had told him to 'forget about your Dad, he's dead now', and as a result Josh head-butted his Head Teacher and was also excluded. Whatever else happened around that time is lost to these students as they focused on their perceived injustices. When asked by students if they saw teachers as the enemy, some, like Chris and Conor, said no and put it down to their own 'short fuses' and 'ADHD', whilst others admitted that they had, at one time or another. Jess put that impression down to her own immaturity.

… about behaviours

Students used the term 'rude' to politely mean offensive, disrespectful, insolent or sexual behaviour and/or comments that were used to impolitely assert themselves, effectively demonstrating resistance. On the issue of students being rude or disrespectful to teachers, Dan said he was rude when teachers did not treat him with respect; Conor said he was rude when teachers just 'moaned and groaned' and did not show him how to do things. For Ryan it very much depended on the mood he was in when he got up or if he had had an altercation with a mate. This was similar for Callum, who said that if he had a row with his mother before he left home for school it put him in a bad mood and he would then be 'horrible'.   Jess saw it as an opportunity to show off. Both identified the fun element of impulsively 'joining in' or 'spinning off others' as funny, which then often led to rudeness towards teachers.   This resonates with the findings of Brownlie (2010) and Feinstein (2004), in which it could be shown that young people seek affirmation from other young people and take risks to achieve that, in the process releasing chemicals which give them a 'buzz' and

which also reinforce the drive to take risks to seek affirmations.   Jess talked about sometimes regretting her rudeness and explained it in terms of external factors that made her feel stressed.

Other features of behaviour that were discussed during the interviews were the use of mobile phones and the use of sexually explicit language that is more in keeping with the culture of working-class 'shop-floor' humour (Willis 1977; Collinson 1988).   Mobile phones were causing conflict between students and teachers as students were using them during lessons, often ignoring learning in favour of social networking and listening to music.

> Josh   'There's so many these days … got so much stuff on … so much gadgets, so much games … so much different things they can do … they can keep you entertained forever. So we can just ignore the teacher and not be bored.' (Paired interview, 29.09.11)
>
> Dan   '… kids don't listen to teachers, they do it to wind them [teachers] up.' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)
>
> Callum   'Best thing that ever been invented.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)
> Gary   'Swear to God, take my phone off me and I'll stab everyone …' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)
>
> Jess   'It's my life, it's my life …' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)
> Ryan   'If I didn't have my phone, I don't actually know what I'd do. … you feel insecure without your phone … so, Betty [researcher], can I ask you a question: what would you do if you didn't have your Blackberry or computer? … You'd struggle, wouldn't you, you'd feel lost?' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

The effect of the mobile phone as a distraction to learning was a behaviour management issue, and students often seemed addicted to them; this was more than choosing to be disruptive – they could not help themselves and they had to respond instantly to the phone. The phones disturbed some students, and when they asked others to switch them off they were ignored or met with an aggressive response, so they stopped asking. The mobile phone was an important part of their social and cultural identity, as illustrated earlier by Katz and Sugiyama (2005). It signified being part of a much larger symbolic social group, and often the size of that group was as important as being able to belong to it. Social networking enabled them to be in contact with others regardless of time, distance or place or what their teachers were trying to instil in them. Some were more involved with the features of the phone (apps, music, games) and others with the ability to communicate with friends and family. Parents too featured in this, calling or texting students when they were in lessons, making disciplining students over the inappropriate use of their phones doubly

difficult. When students got themselves into trouble, they often 'got in first' with their parents by contacting them on their phones.

When asked why students use sexually explicit language, Callum denied using sexually explicit language until Gary pointed out how he did and what words he used.

> Callum 'Is that what you mean by sexually explicit language? I don't mean it like that, I use it in anything that makes sense. Obviously, I'm aware of the sexual side of it like "dick" is a penis …' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

Having a peer in the interview was helpful in establishing who knew what without losing face. When Conor and Chris discussed the use of sexually explicit language, they saw it as a means of diffusing their anger. They also thought some people used it to show off and to try and be funny. Dan, Jess, Josh and Kyle admitted to swearing without really being aware of it and put this down to being brought up in environments in which swearing was the norm, such as the home or the community, but they also they said they knew when it was inappropriate to swear, such as during appearances in court or to someone 'proper' or a grandmother. Jess talked about the 'power' of swearing and how it intimidated others.

> Jess '… when I'm angry, it's the worst because I think that like, swearing at somebody is making 'em … like, if somebody was to 'ave a go at me it wouldn't intimidate me. But if somebody swore at me, I feel intimidated. So I know the power of swearing, d'ya know what I mean? So, if I was saying "You fucking bitch, you fucking this" you'd be like "whoa"'.

She also went on to say, perceptively:

> 'One, it makes them feel bigger; two, it's threatening, intimidating; three, some students do it 'cos they don't realise they are doing it; and four, like my Mom has got loose on me. If I dared to say the "c" word or the "f" word in front of my Mom I'd be really in trouble. But if I say … I hurt my finger a bit and say "Oh, shit" she'd like, "Oh, what have you done?" My Mom wouldn't think about it, but when I'm out in public, if I was sat with my Mom in front of … you know …, she'd be really disappointed because you don't realise adults will look at 'er and go "What are her parents like?" I've learned that there's lots of reasons, some people don't mean to do it, some find it intimidating, some people think they are hard doing it. It's a mixture of things.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

In some interviews, students deliberately tempered their use of sexually explicit words by only using the first letter of an offensive word, indicating clearly that they understood the social conventions around the use of such language, or apologised when they used the full words. In this situation, they assumed a 'teacher' position, willingly and comfortably explaining what words were used, in what circumstances and

what they meant to them. This was an interesting juxtaposition for me as Head Teacher/researcher, and I was impressed by how articulate some were. Gary and Callum emphasised their use of sexually explicit language in their interviews, quite possibly to see if I could be shocked by it and to derail the discussions by challenging me to take disciplinary action, or quite possibly because they were simply indifferent to my status, age and/or gender. As they do not normally speak to me in this way, I was inclined to think they were behaving in a daring manner to see how far they could go, behaving in a similar way to Willis's lads by legitimately displaying a marked lack of respect for issues relating to authority, age and gender. In their own way, and as Hall (in Proctor, 2004) observed, the latter students were attempting to win 'cultural space from the dominant group' and assert themselves as non-conformists or resistant.

All the students recognised the issue of 'pushing teachers around'. This was not a physical thing, but how they (students) tried to get control. Most knew when they had gone too far, and most regretted the incident and apologised in various forms either by saying sorry immediately, writing a note of apology, or by behaving better. As Willis (1977) acknowledged, weakness in and the misfortunes of others brought out the viciousness in 'the lads', and reducing staff to tears or near tears was evidence of this viciousness. Ryan and Jess talked about making teachers cry, and Dan claimed it was part of the teacher's job to be calm. Relationships with teachers were variable, and whilst students accepted some degree of authority from their teachers, they clearly did not respect them per se. They knew how to upset them and how to exploit weakness. They saw this as only 'having a laff', but there were some serious undertones to this, as Callum illustrated in his description of a situation when he was joking with another student about his weight in a lesson. When the teacher showed amusement at the discussion, he feigned annoyance with the express intention of making the teacher feel guilty:

> Callum 'I was well annoyed and then she [teacher] told me off for saying "Why are you laughing, don't be so disrespectful to me." And then I owned her. I made her feel like … this big. 'Cos I said "You've … with degrees and everything and you're laughing at a pathetic little joke about someone being fat." I sez, "That's unprofessional" and she felt about that big. You could tell, she didn't know where to look.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

Similarly, Gary's misdemeanours in school centred on him 'having a laff' (Willis 1977 and 2011; Collinson 1988; Nolan and Anyon 2004) at the expense of his teachers (acting out resistance to win cultural space).

> Gary   'Having a laff … pissing about … as soon as a teacher started being a dick, I started being more of a dick to them instead of … just pissing about and not being a dick to them … walking in and calling them a prick … see what happens.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

'Having a laff' was a big theme for all students. If it did not happen for them then they went out of their way to have fun or to 'chill'.

> Dan   '… without a laff and a joke you're not having fun, so you're not going to enjoy coming here … if there wasn't a laff in the day then I don't think we'd come. There's no point in coming if you're not having a laff and a joke. When [student] was kicking off that wasn't a laff. We wasn't laughing with her we was laughing at her 'cos of how stupid she was being throwing books and things like that. Just isn't a laff, it's just being … violent.' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)

Looking for the opportunity to 'have a laff' was a dare, a challenge to see how far they could take things and a symbol of freedom and autonomy (Collinson 1988), and it was therefore cultural. Chris thought that 'having a laff' was for different reasons, such as having fun, communicating with others and getting to know people better, and that it stopped students getting miserable in lessons.   Chris also thought that 'having a laff' in lessons could be negative if it interfered with his work. Students liked it when staff shared 'a laff' with them. Some felt good about other people's discomfort, as shown earlier when Callum talked of 'owning his teacher'. Others liked the slapstick element of people falling off chairs or having them pulled away as they were sitting down. When they got bored they were most likely to start fidgeting or fiddling with things, and this escalated into flicking or throwing pens and pencils to seek attention. Sometimes, 'funny' was doing something and waiting to see how long it was before they got caught or seeing someone's (usually a teacher or Community Support Officer) response to their saying or doing something they knew they should not have said or done, which may have been for reasons of exploration, resistance or exploitation.

… about relationships

To gain insight into what the students thought about themselves and others, I asked them about their friends and gangs and those who did not join in but got on with their work. Every student interviewed said of those that complied, 'Fair play to them', and whilst some said they 'admired' them, others recognised that it took 'strength and will power' and that they were likely to 'do good when they're older'. In this way,

they demonstrated that they understood the cultural, meritocratic expectations for success. I asked them

who they would choose out of all the students on roll at the time as being the best person to work with and

who would not be the best to work with, and in the following sociogram we can see how these different

relationships connect:
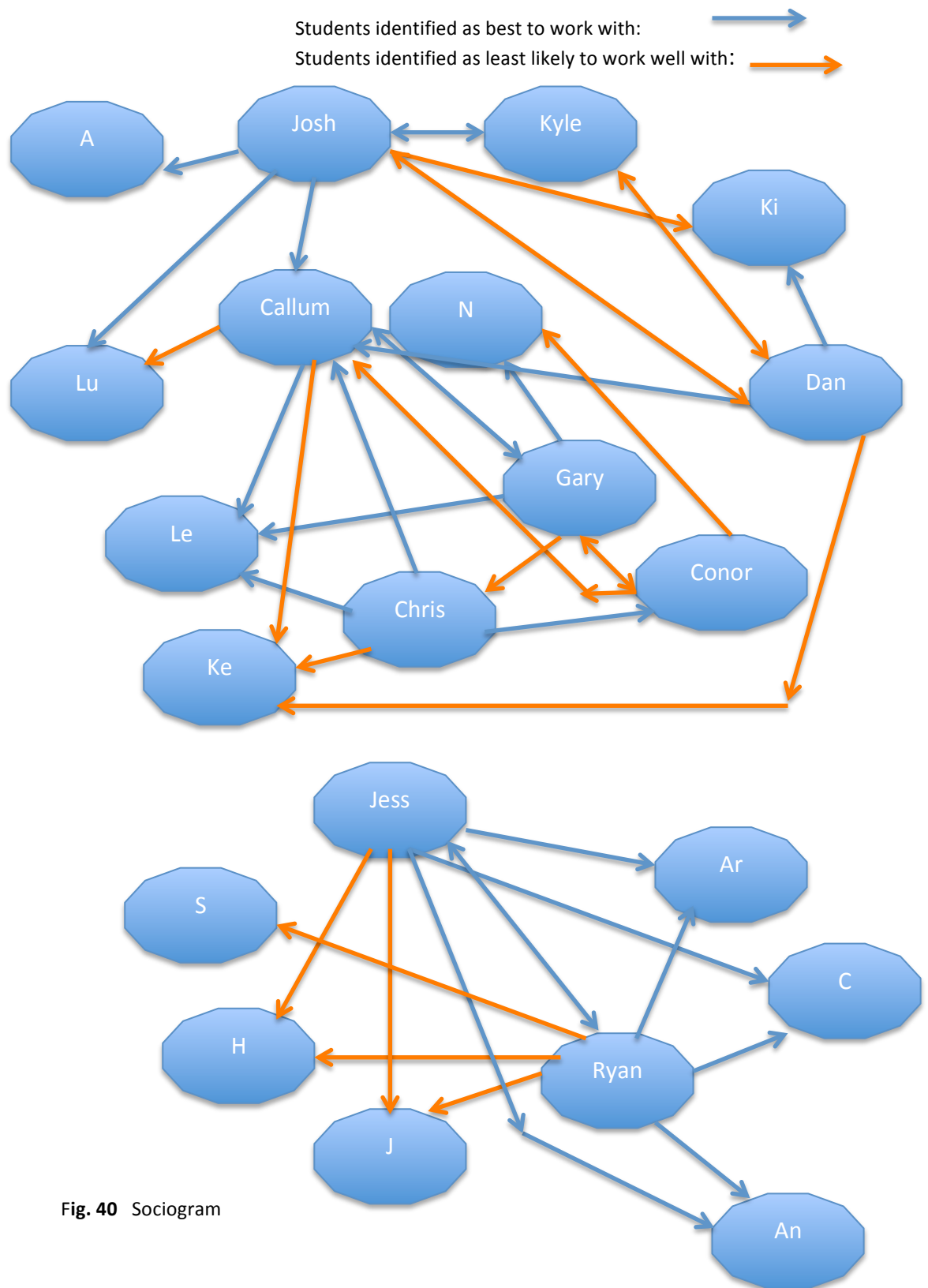
Fig. 40 Sociogram

The students who were represented by initials were not part of the interview group and have been identified in this way to protect their anonymity. The picture shows two distinct groupings: the lower one is a distinct cohort from 2010/11, but the top, rather larger, cluster consists of two intermingled cohorts, the Year 10 and Year 11 cohorts of 2011/12. When the PRU was relocated onto a single site, these two cohorts formed the PRU intake for that year. Callum was a popular choice for students in both Year 10 and Year 11 to work with, whilst Dan and an unidentified student, Ke, were among the least popular.

Some students saw themselves as leaders, such as Dan, who had a well-developed sense of his own identity, which, judging from the sociogram and comments from other students, showed a different reality.

> Dan 'Well, I'm like a role model, 'cos what I say goes really. I've got quite an influence on people 'cos if I say stop, you know what I mean, a lot of people listen to me. I dunno why, I've just got one of those leading personalities.' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)

Yet whilst Josh and Kyle stated that they were 'alright with Dan', they would not count on him to help them, and Dan seemed to understand this.

> Dan 'Me, Kyle and Josh were quite good mates … but we've grown apart here … I don't find them my mates no more. I like my mates to know that if I got into trouble they'd be there and Lu, Callum and Ki would be whereas Josh and Kyle, if there was any trouble they wouldn't stick up for me. They'd just stand there … if I got kicked the crap out of, I get kicked the crap out of … and they won't stand in or anything. I'm not rude to them by any means. I'm still polite to them and everything. They're alright lads and that, but I just don't find them my mates.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

There was mutual understanding about their relationship with each other. Dan said he liked having control, and recognised that if he went off-task then most others followed him.

> Dan 'You've got to show that you're more harder than everybody else … people can't take the piss out of you. Because you are the top person, people can't take the piss out of you. If people take the piss – take the piss back. You *never* stand down from confrontations. As well, if someone starts on you, you don't back away, you just stand there … and someone should be knowledgeable as well for the top person. They shouldn't just be "oh, we're the hardest." They should have brains to go with it as well, they should be the person you ask for advice and things like that.' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)

This and other discussions around who was 'top dog' provided insight into the way these young people established and defined identity and power relations in their social groups. The oldest two students, Ryan and Jess, talked of the 'top dog' in terms of risk-taking.

Jess   'I think the 'top dog' is somebody who is the naughtiest because you wouldn't dare do something as naughty as them, so they are the bravest. You're like, "Whoa, I wouldn't do that." Somebody, if they came in a new pair of trainers, everybody would want those trainers; somebody who smokes the most weed; somebody who has the most lines in the night, sniffin' an' stuff; someone who does the most and the best of things, and is the scariest and you wouldn't dare fight. … Top dog is a hard position to keep. I used to look up to [student], now she's doin' drugs, etc., … lost respect.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Others described a 'top dog' as being the hardest, the best, the funniest and the fittest; someone who 'bigs themselves up'; shows off to get attention; and someone who looks out for his or her mates and provides protection. Fighting was entertainment as well as the means to prove oneself. Identity was clearly a strong cultural component of the youth scene, as illustrated in the literature review, and one that students went out of their way to protect, as in the following conversation between Callum and Gary (Paired interview, 06.10.11):

Callum   '… you *never* grass anyone up let alone mates. Worst thing you can be is a grass. Do you like grasses [to Gary]?'
Gary   'I fuckin' 'ate 'em.'
Callum   'Grass is a grass, no one likes 'em.'
Gary   '… mates, they're meant to stick up for you, not get you in the shit. I'd kill for mine [mates].'
Callum   'I wouldn't go that far … if me and my mates got arrested, and my mate was or had already been in trouble, I'd take the blame and say it was me. An' I know my Mom and Dad would have a go at me but still, I'd rather do time for my mates.'

Willis (1977) highlighted the camaraderie of the shop floor and 'the lads', which bonded them as mates. It is a term used to describe loose friendship groups, usually but not exclusively male friendships. Garrett (1989) described 'mates' as 'friends to do things with', that is, doing rather than talking. 'Mateship', as opposed to friendship, is a casual, non-intimate relationship. In the PRU, most of the students lived in different areas and therefore formed casual friendships at the PRU. According to Dan, mates had high expectations of or protective codes between each other. In discussing their friendship groups, some said they knew of groups in which the rules were listed on a sheet of paper that each member had a copy of, but the students participating in this research tended to subscribe to codes of behaviour such as 'respect' for each other or not 'telling' or 'grassing' on your mates. This bonding was important, although Jess thought it

was more important to have friends rather than be in a group or gang, and loyalty was important for all of them.   Callum and Gary discussed the status of Garth (leader of a local gang), who afforded protection to his subordinates:

EE-M   'What's he [Garth] like then?'
Callum   'A nasty, hard person ... everyone knows him 'cos of it and if you're mates, no one will hit you or nothing ... none of his mates get hurt.'
Gary   'That's pretty shit ... you're supposed to fight your own battles …'
Callum   'I fight me own battles!   Me an' 'im [Garth] ... in Year 7 ... was best mates, couldn't separate us ... in Year 8 we was, and then I got kicked out ... I got grounded so I didn't see him as much but now I'm going back out with him we're best mates again. Some lads started on me the other week at the fair. I didn't know what I was doing and he was pushing me and pushing me ... and then he punched me so I punched him back and Garth ran over and went ... knocked him clean out cos he sez he hates seeing his mates get hit. He's a proper mate ... he's nearly done time.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

This association that some students had for other 'higher' status individuals such as Garth was an illustration of imagined social capital (Quinn 2010) and helped to keep the gang identifiable and cohesive. On the issue of bullying, all except one had experienced being bullied and all admitted to bullying others at some point or another. Retaliation was the main reason given for bullying, and most thought bullying was shameful. Jess said it was far worse to be humiliated by a boy than a girl.

Jess   '… who was it that used to make me feel really low? When boys rip ya … when boys rip girls, it's so horrible. I'd rather have a girl bitch at me 'cos it wouldn't embarrass me, but when boys embarrass you it's like … Oh, My God!' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Ryan talked about his 'flirty' nature with females, which was clearly a part of his self-image/identity. Both Jess and Ryan described the steadying influence of their respective partners, which steered them away from drugs and drink and helped them get back to learning. It seemed a lot easier for them to conform if they had someone they valued, such as a boyfriend or girlfriend, who wanted them to get on with making something of themselves or someone they could do it for instead of themselves, parents or teachers. Ryan and Jess also had a good friendship with each other that they both saw as mature and respectful.

Josh and Kyle were offended by the comments and behaviour of other lads towards girls:

Josh   'They [boys] are disrespectful to them [girls]. It's like vulgarity how they say it. It's vulgar, it's like … 'scuse the language like … they see some really pretty girl, really beautiful girl like, and they say, "I would love to f*** her."

Kyle   'Yeah, they like L [student] and all that … think it's big and hard … they think women love being disrespected … ' (Paired interview, 29.09.11)

Gary and Callum talked of 'bare friends with benefits'. Although both were 'linking' with steady girlfriends at the time, they had quite strong views about 'friends with benefits', whom they described as girls they could move on from – hour by hour if they wanted – without any ties.

Gary   'They are just for the pastime, a bit of fun …'
Callum   'They're thick, slags are gits … slags are thick …'
Gary   'It's just about getting a bit of physical work done.'
Callum   'Everybody knows what a lad wants when they get wiv us …'
EE-M   'What makes a girl a slag?'
Callum   'Girls who sleep around. I know a girl our age who's had sexual intercourse with 15 males.'
Gary   '[girl]'s had 17 lads.'
Callum   'She's a vile mess anyway.'
Gary   'I know man. I don't see how she gets it.'
Callum   'Desperation, my friend.' (Paired interview, 06.10.11)

On the issue of what qualities they would be looking for in a future long-term partner, Gary said he could not imagine himself in that position, whilst Callum talked about someone who would be loyal and trustworthy – 'not some Jeremy Kyle mess'. After the main discussion with Dan, the conversation continued for a while around settling situations with force, and gender. Dan said that he would 'hit a bloke' but he would not hit a woman. He thought it was a wrong thing to do and did not respect men who did it. When asked what he thought these men got from hitting women, he said he thought that some men just liked doing it, and described a scene in which an employee of his parents' business turned up for work having sustained a beating by her boyfriend. Dan said, '[If] I saw a bloke hitting a woman now I'd hit him. I wouldn't think twice. It's just horrible.' Socio-cultural influences were shaping a code of behaviour for these students, and they were developing quite strong feelings about how to treat the opposite sex, whilst at the same time differentiating between partners who could be used and partners who meant something to them for long-term relationships. This aspect of cultural reproduction appeared to be stemming from friendships and family interactions.

… about leisure (and the police)
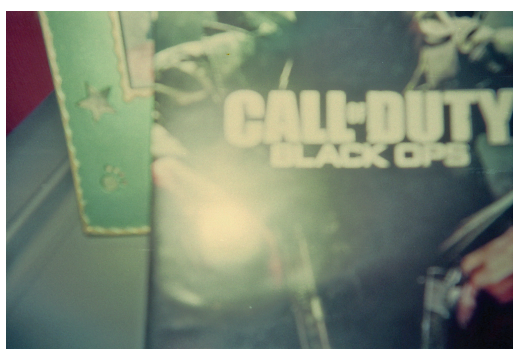
Fig. 41   More significant images from students' photos

As we have seen previously, most altercations with the police occurred during students' leisure or recreational time, and this was usually when they were with friends. The boys tended to hang around the neighbourhood, outside shops or play areas. Sometimes they went to each other's homes to play Xbox games or listen to music. Jess and Ryan complained about the lack of affordable activities for young people in the area. Going to the cinema, bowling, ice-skating or having a meal out were expensive pastimes, and buying a bottle of vodka for £7 was a much cheaper alternative. Jess also thought it was harder for boys than girls in that boys liked to play football, and when they were unable to do that, the alternative was the pub or hanging about in different places. She talked about a 'girly' night in with girlfriends, drinking a bottle or two of wine between them, painting their nails, doing their hair and discussing the latest 'hot' or 'fit' males in their social circles, watching a 'weepy' DVD or discussing the gossip magazines.   The boys talked about going round to mates' homes and listening to music, sometimes all night. A recurrent theme was the amount of time students spent staying up very late at night and were out and about, at large in their

communities without adult supervision. They seemingly had a considerable amount of time to do as they

pleased and go where they wanted to.

The police were quite a different issue for our students. They differentiated between police officers and

Community Support Officers, seeing police officers as able to wield more influence. In general, they valued

the police in terms of keeping them safe when they felt threatened or when crimes had been committed

against them: as Josh said, 'Who else you gonna call?'

> Jess   'The police are the whole reason that in [town] it's OK to walk about. They're
> arseholes, trust me. They're arseholes, but without them we'd be fucked. 'Cos I
> know, there's many times … the first person I've called is the police an' didn't even
> ask my Mom. If I was out and I was getting beaten up by some lad or whatever,
> first person … is the police.' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

But when they had fallen foul of the law and were tagged, as one student was, they (the students) could be

quite vitriolic about the police. The police were resented for moving them on when they had gathered in

large groups in shopping areas, and this exposed the frustration of young people about gathering socially

and being dispersed or moved on because they made communities feel uncomfortable.

… about parents and home

Some students had very close relationships with their parents, as illustrated by Jess,

> Jess   'I've been brought up like the best way what I could ever be brought up. If I asked
> for money I'd get it. My Mom took out a loan so I could go to theatre school. My
> Dad used to ferry me about the country to auditions. I've been brought up so well
> … my Mom's done everything for me …' (Paired interview, 20.05.11)

Others knew their parents were upset by their behaviours and had hoped for better from them. Jess, Kyle

and Josh talked about wanting to help their parents, to treat them and to ease some of their financial

burdens, and they knew that their parents want them to get 'a good education'.

> Conor   'I can honestly be truthful and put me hands up here. I've had some downtimes
> this week, haven't I? And like, my Mom is really upset about it so that's why I
> came in and apologised last Tuesday … 'cos my Mom was literally in tears … I
> couldn't hack it.' (Paired interview, 18.11.11)

> Josh   ' … or like, give my Mom a bit of money. She always says "Why can't someone do
> this or give me a bit of help?" and I'd love to be able to actually help her for once,
> give her a bit of money instead of taking all the time … give, give her back a bit …'

Kyle   'Same really, get some money, give my Mom some money make her happy.'
        (Paired interview, 29.09.11)

Dan's parents were angry that he was excluded from school and he said that they were angry with him as a result.

Dan   'Well, my Dad always believes teachers over everything else … he'd take your word and ground me …' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)

Ryan's parents were pleased with what they saw as a second chance for him at the PRU; Jess admitted that although her mother was not pleased initially, 'she loves it now'.   She also admitted to going home and portraying the PRU as a 'shit-hole', which did not help. Both said their parents appreciated the rapid contact when issues arose, and Jess said her mother has a lot of respect for the school/PRU. Clearly, what their parents thought was important to them. Josh and Kyle said their mothers were disappointed when they were excluded from school but were pleased they were trying to turn themselves around.

The students' images of home life were significant indicators of their classed existence. They were well aware of the differences between them and other more affluent homes and households, and one student described the first picture below as 'The shit view from my bedroom'.

Fig. 42 Student images of home

The personal and common areas are dominated by televisions and appear to be minimalist. The artefacts, such as the guitar with one string and an over-large bedroom television, and the curtains drawn for daytime television might also indicate low social, cultural and economic capital to a more affluent observer.

Only one student classed his family as poor. Another knew his family was much better off by comparison, boasting that his dad was 'on a grand a week, … well, nearly two grand'. Three said they did not think they needed any more than they had and that their families were enough for them. Jess had wanted for nothing and understood the sacrifices her parents had made to give her the best they could. Josh and Kyle both agreed that it would be nice to have a bit more money to do more at weekends or to give to their mothers.

As described earlier, Bourdieu (1984) identified photographic evidence as a way of illustrating the variations between the rich and poor in terms of social and economic capital, through 'taste' and the subject choice. Subject choice and 'taste', as evidenced by the students' choices, reflected poverty in social, cultural and economic capital. Bourdieu advocated a 'factorial analysis', which I found difficult to achieve with so few

usable prints and such subjective material. In considering 'taste', I became very aware of the subjective nature of my thoughts, the benchmark being my middle-class experiences embedded in my social and cultural capital. At one level this seemed unfair, because in order to analyse, one has to compare with something. This would be evidenced of Skeggs' (2004) view of the place of value in the process of positioning.

… about the future

Conor and Chris spoke about helping others less fortunate than themselves, and they also talked about the limitations of dole money, which barely covered the household bills. Jess and Ryan talked about having their own homes at some point in the future, learning to drive and having a car. Although the majority did not see themselves as disadvantaged by their homes or upbringing, they did enjoy and want things that would cost money. There was an element of competing and conspicuous consumption among some students: the one who declared that his family was poor boasted a 50-inch flat-screen TV, plus a 32-inch one in the kitchen, as did his friend with the dad earning nearly 'two grand' a week.

In terms of generating an income, they all had aspirations to work, to get a job, as illustrated in Fig. 12. Some had jobs, such as working for food chains, or being a linesman at the local football club's junior league matches. Kyle and Josh would have liked to be paid to go to school and showed little motivation to search for work. Dan thought work brought more than just money – it brought experience and status.

> Dan   'Experience. You just seem like a better person if you've got a job … 'cos if I look at somebody and they haven't got a job, you think they could be getting a job, or you could be looking. But somebody who has a job is like a better person. Nor a better person, but a better-off person … they've got like money. Somebody who's sat there waiting for the next dole pay to come in is …'

And,

> Dan   'Employers are looking for a good person to be on their team. Teachers just have to teach anybody, you can't choose, you get what you are given … got to like everybody … can't at the end of the day go Dan, I ain't havin' 'im. Whereas an employer can. Big difference.' (Individual interview, 06.10.11)

They saw teachers and employers as people who were in a position to tell them what to do, but work paid.

A good boss was someone they could have a laugh with, someone who would 'pick you up' if you had done

something wrong but praised you if you had done something well. A good boss 'gets there on time', had good qualifications and 'knuckles down to work' themselves. Dan said there was a big difference between teachers and employers; teachers had to teach anybody, but employers could choose who worked for them.

This insight of Dan's reveals shades of Willis's (1977) concept of 'cultural penetration' whereby the counter-school culture '… critically exposes some of the crucial social transactions and contradictions within education' (p126).

Staff perceptions – teachers

Teachers acknowledged that the PRU curriculum was narrower than that taught in mainstream school and believed that students understood why but missed practical lessons such as design technology, history and geography. One teacher said, 'They know they have to do it [school] and they resent the time they are involved in it …. .' Seeing the value of what they were learning often came late to the PRU students, and usually happened at the 'last minute, just before the exams'. Teachers believed that the students 'do not want to be where they are now for the rest of their lives' either, and thought this was slowly beginning to motivate some. Teachers said that when students had a bad experience in school with a particular teacher who 'got in their face', it resulted in a negative attitude towards the subject thereafter, regardless of any change of teacher. Teachers also recognised that the behaviours of the PRU students in mainstream often prevented them from having choices or participating in practical activities, and in this way, their mainstream curriculum became impoverished.

Teachers saw some parents as being anti-authority as a result of their own earlier school experiences and behaviours, and thought that they passed these opinions on to their children from an early age. As a result, respect for teachers and learning had eroded over time and students were more vocal about what they liked and disliked. One teacher said that students did not value particular subjects, seeing them as unnecessary and irrelevant to the career they had in mind, and the challenge then was to make them relevant. The teachers believed that the students valued them because of the emphasis placed on

achievement. They were also aware that false praise was counterproductive and that students actually knew when they were working well or had produced a good piece of work, although they would not always readily accept praise. One teacher said, 'They like proper praise for proper reasons.' Another teacher commented that having taught some of the students in the PRU in mainstream too, the relationships with those students were actually better at the PRU than they were in mainstream, possibly because the groups in the PRU were much smaller and there was more contact time, which enabled staff and students to get to know one another better. However, she and other staff also observed that the attitudes of students towards teachers were not significantly different between the PRU and mainstream schools. Student motivation for work and careers was said to be as varied as it was in mainstream. Another teacher said she thought the PRU students had quite unrealistic ideas about the world of work and that students assumed they would walk into jobs or that their families would keep them.

Although the PRU was situated in an FE college, teachers said the PRU students saw the college students wandering about and 'having a laff' but they did not seem to register that when in lessons, the college students worked very hard and did a lot of work at home and that some would get to the college early in the morning. According to one teacher, the PRU students often seemed intimidated by the college students and had stereotypical views of them, assuming that the post-16 students were brighter and more privileged than them. The teachers had quite a detailed discussion around the issue of students wanting to achieve, and recognised the cultural influences that determined whether or not it was 'cool' to achieve. One teacher remarked that in the British culture, the fashionably rebellious were not the poor but often the more affluent.

The students arrived at the PRU from across the borough and from distinctly different social areas. On arrival, students were thought to feel insecure because of neighbourhood tensions, and there were insufficient numbers of them at the PRU to form neighbourhood gangs. In discussing identity issues, the backgrounds of two students from the same area were compared. Teachers noted how distinctly different they were, differentiating between material items such as quality of clothing and mobile phones. Area or neighbourhood was said to be an important aspect of students defining themselves, their identity and of developing a sense of belonging:

RM   'They're definitely showing it's area … so they are establishing what area [place] they actually belong in … and that within working-class families is important. Which team you support at this age … where are your loyalties lying? Are they lying with your friends who you've made at school, or are they lying where they should be, at home and where you live?' (Teacher, group interview, 03.01.12)

In discussing the influence of class, teachers interchanged 'class' with 'culture'. One teacher said that she thought the middle class had been challenged over issues of race and area (neighbourhood) and that it was the middle classes rather than the working classes that challenged such attitudes. One commented that it was 'more normal for people to move around in middle classes', whilst another teacher said,

DW   'I live in [place] which is a relatively affluent area and from the people I know in our cul-de-sac, there's only one family I think from [the locality]. We're all immigrants into the area because that's more normal you know. If you're affluent, your job takes you all over the country.' (Teacher, group interview, 03.01.12)

One teacher described the background culture of the students as working-class 'personified' by the TV soap *Eastenders*, in which people 'yell at their neighbours' instead of talking to resolve disputes; and other teachers said that the relationship-building experiences of PRU students were very different to their own and were therefore difficult to deal with.

In discussing the relationship issues between the boys and girls, one teacher highlighted the general view that it was 'OK' for a lad to have lots of relationships with girls but that if a girl had lots of relationships with men or boys, she was labelled a 'slag'. Another teacher introduced a new term, the 'man-slag', which was used by a male student about his father, who had multiple relationships and subsequent offspring. Another teacher said that she had observed that some of the lads thought of the girls as 'fishwives' and did not approve of their behaviours and did not want to put up with them. She stated, 'They don't want to mix because it's the wrong type of girl to be going out with because she's not from the same place.' This idea linked back to mobility issues and neighbourhood identity. Once the students returned to their home communities after school and during holidays, they had limited capacity to meet up with boyfriends and girlfriends. Therefore, their dominant relationships tended to be formed with people in the same neighbourhood, where access to each other was easier. Teachers were aware of the different relationship role models that some students were exposed to. Students had described to teachers instances in which their mothers were more like teenagers than adults with parenting responsibilities: going out, getting drunk

and bringing home lots of different men. Some students were surprised to learn that their teachers were in stable, long-term marriages or relationships and that their children had the same father. One teacher reminded the group that not all working-class families brought their children up in this way and that many take their children on holidays and day trips and gave them a wide range of experiences, taking them to various clubs and activities and encouraging them to read.

The use of sexually explicit language was regarded as a reflection of immaturity and a means of provoking a reaction. It was seen as image-enhancing behaviour that came from a mix of influences: television, the media, home and parents. When asked about the power of using sexually explicit language, teachers agreed that it was aggressive and intimidating and produced a sense of powerfulness.

DW   'I was thinking about this driving to work the other day. Somebody had cut me up and in my mind I was using extremely foul language and I thought if I called him a *******, if I'd used that without the f-word or something, it would have sounded much tamer. But if you swear when you say it, it sounds much more forceful, like you mean it. So yes, it has more power and more meaning. And again, if you haven't got that breadth of vocabulary to express yourself articulately, it's a lot quicker and easier and it sounds harder if you swear …' (Teacher, group interview, 18.01.12)

The students' choice of language was thought to be strongly influenced by gang culture and peer pressure, and was a 'teenage way of talking'. In formal situations such as their 'speaking and listening' assessments, the students knew they had to curb their language and did because it mattered, demonstrating that they could adapt if the situation required them to. The PRU students had difficulties in interpreting exam questions, and staff invested a lot of work into developing those skills needed to deconstruct questions. Some of the teachers acknowledged that the limited breadth of vocabulary and the use of restricted codes identified by Giddens (2008) were common among lower-class families and neighbourhoods, and also acknowledged the students' experiences of reading and other activities that collectively impacted on the development of their language skills.

When student behaviour went 'over the top', teachers thought students were generally shocked and became anxious. If a fight erupted, students who were not directly involved were often concerned about the impact on their teachers. The teachers thought this was because the students fundamentally did not

want to fight or get drawn in to a fight; staff believed that students felt valued at the PRU; that they were allowed space to show their individuality; that the PRU afforded them a safety net; and that staff did not 'get in their faces' or tried to 'wind them up'. Students who needed routines were allowed to have them, and that reduced anxiety. Although students exercised resistance at times, they usually succumbed to the positive attitudes of staff and appropriately deserved praise. Occasionally a student would resist every effort to engage, but they would not usually become a nuisance. Teachers agreed that girls were harder to engage than boys because they tended to brood over issues whereas boys tended to deal with situations more spontaneously. On the issue of a 'top dog', the teachers said that students gravitated towards the ones they thought were powerful, or who had something to give them, such as 'weed'. Interestingly, the teachers identified Dan as a 'top dog', which fitted in with, and possibly reinforced, Dan's perceptions of himself.

Staff perceptions – teaching assistants

The TAs recognised that students enjoyed some subjects more than others and that maths was usually the one subject they disliked most and was much more of a struggle for them. They said that students enjoyed the practical subjects most but that some could not cope well with choices, that students were more likely to engage with the subject if they engaged with the teacher, and that the learning was linked to the things they knew about (relevant). They all recognised that the students had great insecurities when it came to learning and that this affected their self-image. Students did not want to appear to be too good because they did not want to be called 'geeks' by other students, and similarly some students did not ask questions in case they appeared stupid and were laughed at. In these instances, the TAs anticipated the questions students needed to be asking and they asked instead, enabling the students to 'save face'. Other strategies included asking the students to explain something to them – to 'teach' them. They said the attitude of students to learning was affected by the mood they were in when they arrived at the PRU and that this was often a reflection of a bad morning at home or because of something negative that happened the previous evening. The TAs reported that students had a lot of respect for their teachers and showed it in different ways, by asking for help and by trusting staff to help them. They recognised that the students want to be treated as adults and enjoyed the moments when they were. They said that the students liked reporting to the Head Teacher when they had had a good lesson. Although teachers and TAs motivate students to learn,

maintaining that motivation was difficult for students. The TAs were concerned about motivation for learning and recognised the self-talk that students were adopting, such as, 'What's the point?' or, 'There's no jobs', as counter-productive. They felt that this negative self-talk was contributing to an increase in mental health issues and a decline in confidence among young people and was leading some towards depression and despondency. Equally, they knew that some students did want to improve their chances. Early on in the discussion, the TAs referred to the lack of language and understanding as a significant barrier to learning.

On the issue of relationships, the TAs identified that some students seemed to be highly sexualised in their language and behaviour whereas others seemed very naïve. There was some discussion about how sexually active the students were, resulting in the opinion that not many were, and where they were it was monogamous: 'They've got quite high morals,' one TA said. The students' sexualised language and swearing were seen as showing off for the benefit of their peers, and the TAs commented that the students rarely swore at or used sexually explicit language directly at them and it was therefore depersonalised. The TAs felt that it had become less of a feature, and was certainly no different to students in mainstream – and often, sexually explicit language featured a lot less in the PRU than when staff were travelling home on public transport. TAs also noted that students would exploit a perceived weakness for fun and entertainment: 'they really enjoy pressing buttons'.

The TAs reported that the students were curious about the relationships the PRU staff had with their partners and children, and that it was apparent that the PRU students had a very different upbringing to those of the staff and their own children. When asked if they thought it was to do with class or cultural issues, one TA said it was both, 'a socio-economic thing … where it is seen as the norm'. Getting pregnant was an ambition for some girls, as they thought they would 'get a house' and get away from home, little realising that this was not reality and that there was a great deal of financial hardship in store for them if they went down this road. Fortunately, the TAs said, some girls were beginning to realise this and were starting to be put off teenage pregnancies.

On the issue of a 'top dog', the TAs saw this as manipulative behaviour and focused on the girls, totally ignoring the issues with the boys. Bullying was seen to be something students did to deflect attention from themselves or to retain friendships with particular students, and to conform with group behaviours. Building positive relationships was seen as the core aspect to their work and something that the TAs thought was sometimes frowned on in mainstream schools as a distraction. They recognised that a lot of the students arrived at the PRU with a negative attitude towards school and the staff and that it could take a while to break down the defensive barriers that the students put up.

One TA said she thought the acquisition of language skills was hugely important, but not something the students readily bought into. The language used in exam papers was often complicated, confusing and off-putting, and teachers were taking a lot of time to explain to students how to understand and answer the exam questions. There was a view that the students' language was limited by their social circles and home life and was 'a socio-economic thing'.

> JR '… possibly because they go home and it's a demotivating type of atmosphere, and they come back and they've got to start building themselves up again and that's hard work. They are not coming from a cultural background whereby they are receiving the similar type of support educationally at home, so they are only getting it for the hours they're here. And if they are absent a lot, they're getting even less.' (TA, group interview, 03.01.12)

Students were often embarrassed by the language issues, and for them it was akin to deciphering a foreign language. Peer groups, friends and home were considered to be the main influences, but the TAs' also recognised that the students could adapt their language to suit different situations and circumstances. By broadening their experience in adult environments through work experience or going out on a shopping trip, the students learned to adapt both their behaviour and their language, and taking them out of their comfort zones individually often resulted in them behaving more conventionally.

The staff team understood the importance of educational achievement in influencing life choices and wanted the students to be able to make informed choices and therefore to capitalise on opportunities or chances as they occurred. However, there was general recognition that the curriculum and the assessment framework – with its intense focus on specified attainment levels –created conflict and resistance:

students had to satisfy predetermined academic requirements, particularly in English and maths, with limited language skills, but were happier with 'hands-on' practical subjects, which were limited because of behaviour and costs. Not only was attainment at stake in the learning environment, so too was image and identity, which were often masked by insecurities and behaviour. Students disrupted aggressively, used 'having a laff' as an excuse to derail learning, or withdrew. They did this either because they were confident that there would be insignificant consequences, or because they dared themselves or others dared them to do this and dealing with the consequences would enhance their image and identity amongst their peers.

One teacher thought that students had unrealistic ideas about the world of work, but the evidence shown in Fig. 12 contradicted this, as students illustrated clearly the job fields they saw themselves in and understood that employers had a choice over who they employed and why. Most of the students most of the time wanted employment and recognised that there was a competitive market which required good qualifications, but they seemed unable to find and sustain the determination and resiliency to apply themselves to learning, particularly over time. They were not content to 'play the game' and just do their best; they were frustrated and found relationships and communication difficult to manage. This was reflected in resistant behaviour, particularly towards those that imposed constraints of any kind on them: parents, peers and teachers, and authorities such as the police, that is, dominant and subordinate groups. In this respect, the educational system that was constantly presenting students with meritocratic, middle-class values served to reinforce their sense of inadequacy – and their resolve not to be a part of it.

In the following section I will draw together the key findings and present my conclusions in relation to the research questions to complete the research enterprise.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Throughout this research, I have argued that school exclusion is an insidious practice that it is often seemingly inconspicuous but actually has seriously harmful consequences. I have also argued in this thesis that policy is a cultural phenomenon driven by class values, which perpetuated school exclusion as a behaviour control mechanism that particularly targeted students from working-class backgrounds because they dared not to be compliant with the middle class values and expectations of the policy framework that applied to schools.   The research set out to capture the lived educational experiences of a particular group of PRU students and in doing so, exposed the effects of school exclusion on their attitudes and behaviours, and educational outcomes – which were below national expectations.

In this chapter, I draw together the research outcomes in relation to the research questions: how is the educational progression of students explained, monitored, tracked and used in the PRU setting; what critical external and environmental factors impact on achievement, attainment and behaviour; and what do students have to say about their experiences of education?   Running through the research are the concomitant themes of class, culture and resistance, which I will use as a loose framework within which to present my conclusions, whilst recognising that there is considerable overlap between these themes.

Class

In Chapter 2, I established that society is a classed entity that is based around the capacity and skills of people to generate income, and the population falls into distinct groups with shared or similar social values and lifestyle choices.   In broad terms (but not exclusively), working- and middle-class groups can be differentiated by the jobs they do, the income they generate and the way in which they use their personal resources.   The literature review (p42) also highlighted a significant correlation between social class and attainment, with underachievement among the least well off a particular social concern.   In reviewing the attainment data for the PRU students alongside the IMD and FSM data (which signified low economic capital, i.e. low paid/workless/benefit-reliant families), the research confirmed a correlation between low attainment and social class.   The PRU students in this case study emerged from the bottom 10% of the *national* deprivation rankings, and educational progression had either stalled or regressed as early as their

primary schooling. Arguably, they were potentially at risk of increased social exclusion because their access to social, cultural and economic capitals was limited by the effects of school exclusion.

I identified that the PRU students' job aspirations were strongly influenced by the job sets that were familiar to them. All students could imagine working in the future. Some already had jobs and more of an appetite for earning than learning, which resulted in an enviable work ethic compared to some middle-class counterparts, who would remain in education for much longer without any guarantees of higher-paid or higher-status jobs. Consequently, I argue that these students were actually making a calculated risk that a job was better than no job or the hollow promises of higher-status work later. They were eager to get on with their lives rather than put it on hold in the middle-class way. The social capital of their family members and friends was important too because that was often the means of entry into the job market. Jobs secured in this way (often unskilled and manual/menial) did not rely on applications and interviews, but word of mouth and the reputation of others (social capital). Students who were eager to have money and financial independence were often willing to work for a low wage in order to 'get on the jobs ladder', ironically doing jobs that supported the national economy but which had little social kudos. The discussions with students revealed that they often relied on their capacity for hard work and *personable-ness* for advancement, seeing little or no benefit in competing for qualifications and failing in the process – and because employers employ them at extremely low rates the situation is perpetuated (cultural reproduction).

I found that students made little connection at all with class other than to see some people as better off because they had a job. Among the students in this study there were significant variations in economic capital, which were dependent on parental income and the students' own propensity to generate income; this seems to produce a microcosm as students strove to create their unique identities and to resist or embrace the influences of others' customs and practices. Their choice of language and dress and their appetite for learning reflected that the vast majority of these students came from the impoverished end of the social class structure. Interestingly, limited income did not result in a lack of technology, as might be expected. All had mobile phones and considered them essential to their image, identity and social

networking, and my research showed that through their phones they were able to establish real and imagined connections of importance to more powerful others such as gang leaders and popular peers.

Culture

The literature review in Chapter 2 placed culture in the context of the way social relations are made, organised, understood and experienced. Consequently, I argue that policy is a cultural phenomenon. Policy is devised and shaped by predominantly middle-class professionals; it is divisive and perpetuates class distinctions in that it exposes power relations that generate further 'corrective' policies to maintain the balance of power between the social classes. Policies authorise and rely on data/evidence and media for legitimacy; therefore assessment, evaluation and public accountability feature significantly and fuel the drive for more data and policy, resulting in UK children being '… the most academically certified generation ever' (Ainley and Allen 2010, p45). Policies require children to receive an education, and those who are not 'home educated' are required to attend school. Policies require children to conform to certain patterns of behaviour and make educational progress and to compete for places in further and higher education institutions and work. Policies also require frameworks so that children can speak and be listened to, and this carries hollow undertones because it does not necessarily mean that in being listened to children will have agency. Policies require discipline, compliance and action within a prescribed code and whilst they do not in themselves fulfil the required directives, they are enacted upon by more legitimately powerful others such as teachers, police officers and children's services. Consequently, policies appear to have been created in the interests of children and young people, but these policies are also used by an adult workforce to manage vast numbers of children and young people. In this respect, I argue that large sectors of our public services would collapse if children and young people were uniformly obedient and compliant. This 'daring to be different' behaviour also stimulates further policies and pedagogical discussions, which then alters educational service delivery.

The 'everyday struggles' observed in the PRU reflected the relationships between teachers as the dominant, authoritative characters and students as a subordinate group. My research highlighted how the variables of

social, cultural, symbolic and economic capitals (which included the PRU environment and beyond) contributed to the development of the self and the creation of further opportunities for self-fulfilment, and how it is an on-going process. Yet, as the habitus of students (and staff) expanded, this impacted on relationships, which also affected or changed the culture within the PRU as a social field. Habitus expanded through the exposure to new and changing structures (home, neighbourhood, the PRU as a learning community and friendships), the interplay of capitals, new experiences and struggles and rewards. The students were as much affected by what was going on around them as by the contribution that they were making to the place they were in *at that point in time and space*; and through the process of inscription, some students inadvertently limited their potential to achieve by succumbing to the role of 'victim' in their learning and in their relationships with others.

Resistance

Jess's authentic voice, which described school as ' … a place where they put us to go and learn what we don't want to …', sums up the resistant learner. Insider observations and dialogical evidence provided insight into the impact of the policy framework on the students involved in the study. Objections to the policies and the ways in which they were implemented at the PRU and in schools as experienced by the students resulted in acts of infidelity to school-based values, resistance and exclusion that were either chosen or imposed. I argue that the motivation to resist was mostly generated by being opposed to the imposed, the desire to be identified within their social circles and a fear of failure – or a combination of all of these.

The research data showed that the students had the potential to achieve more than they had, and with early stalling and regression they had experienced several years of unproductive schooling by the time they reached the PRU. This is not to say that students were not learning at all, but rather that they were not receptive to the learning *on offer* in school. When they could be motivated to learn, progress was rapid. It is wrong to assume that emotional and social difficulties equate to learning difficulties, because they do not – although over time, in a daily environment of conflict, the inner tensions and distress exacerbated emotional and social issues, which made learning difficult as opposed to the students having learning

difficulties. Deficiencies in English and language acquisition, however, made access to accreditation difficult and slowed learning progress overall. In some respects, students had 'fixed' themselves by stalling or regressing in learning. The study showed that some students effectively sabotaged their own capacity to learn, preferring this to publicly failing. During the interviews, students commented that in some areas and on some matters they knew more than their teachers did, and the staff agreed with this perception during their interviews. However, in the context of national expectations and standards, the students were deemed to be underachieving, and the PRU students represent the 'sharp end' of the attainment gap, attracting more interventions to enforce cultural conformity.

Most student participants believed they had been victims of bullying, and their behaviours were largely retaliatory. Persistent stressful situations such as bullying or victimisation are known to induce biological changes in the brain, which affect behaviour. These early experiences become inscribed on the self, and can attract behaviours in others that reinforce and perpetuate the behaviours in the perpetrator *and* the recipient, thus stalling or inhibiting a sense of place through domination/subordination. These situations were acted out daily in the family, the neighbourhood and the school or PRU, thus making 'learning to belong' particularly difficult to achieve and bullying difficult to eradicate in the learning community. As these conflicts escalated, either in school or in the neighbourhood at large, this study showed that students were faced with increasing exposure to higher levels of authority and increased sanctions (school exclusions and criminal justice procedures). Whilst this increased kudos for some, it also added further stress, which subsequently altered behaviours, inscriptions and, ultimately, habitus. Similarly, as conflicts escalated in the PRU, the dynamics of the environment altered and the culture or ethos changed from 'open' to 'closed' as more sanctions were introduced to regain control. When PRU students engaged with staff and learning, change occurred. Some achieved improvement in their attainment levels, learnt to enjoy learning, coped better with stress and were successful. In this way, some demonstrated that they had sufficient agency to bring about cultural changes for themselves.

The impact of school exclusion and the potential risk of social exclusion were exacerbated by antisocial and offending behaviours and engagement with the police – sometimes as perpetrators, but also as witnesses and victims and by association. The research showed that the attainment gap was even more pronounced

amongst students in the most deprived homes/neighbourhoods who were also known to the police. The recorded reasons as to why the PRU students were excluded/referred to the PRU were predominantly for conflicts with staff and or other students and for persistent resistant disruptive behaviour. This was not dissimilar to what was happening in the community, according to police intelligence. Further, attendance levels were amongst the lowest in these groups. Collectively, this range of data supports the view that sustained engagement in education is a significant protective factor in terms of safeguarding and social exclusion.

My study demonstrated that behaviour, or actions to deflect learning, was also part of an image/identity issue and therefore cultural. It was not 'cool' to learn in mainstream, and they (students) dared to be different – resulting in exclusion. This daring to be different was the students' (often severe) resistance to imposed learning. To progress in the PRU was challenging to their identities, and to succeed they had to be dared to progress, battling against established identity choices, their adopted culture of resistance amid the cultural influences of deprivation and low aspirations. My research identified that the main reasons for referral were based on oppositional, threatening and persistent disruptive behaviour, which also demonstrated that there has been little change in students' attitudes towards authority in the last 35 years or so. Not only did students compete against each other to learn and achieve qualifications, they competed against each other for friends, relationships and jobs. This constant exposure to competition contributed to shaping identity, and they knew from an early age that to stand out from the crowd was important; and if they were unable to do it through academic achievement then they did it through attention-gripping risky behaviours. They were noticed for being absent or late, for assaulting or threatening someone, for flying in the face of convention or for taking things that did not belong to them.

Where students sought to increase their social capital by risk-taking, it was not known if this was because they had a high drive for resistance or a low threshold for resiliency; further research into this particular phenomenon might be useful in planning social care and/or learning interventions. The social network dynamic and the opinions of others both fuelled and validated the counter-school behaviours.

I was encouraged by how articulate the students could be about their own perspectives and circumstances, and they had a lot to say about schooling and growing up, which provided valuable insights into how their identities were shaped and the prevailing organisational culture in the PRU. These were young people striving to belong, but not to mainstream schooling. Issues of identity were dominant features and were measured by their behaviours in the classroom, neighbourhoods and the family as seen through their own eyes and those of their friendship groups and associated symbolic and imagined networks. They enhanced their social prestige among the student population by employing behaviour strategies so as to be different from the majority but approved by their PRU peers and/or friendship groups. They used their social media contacts to suggest popularity (increased social capital) and made imagined or tenuous links to significant others in their social fields. From my observations and the comments of staff and students, I noted that some students used behaviour to shape their identity, such as when playing the joker and 'having a laff', and also as a resistant response to learning.

Competition and the struggle to be assertive create a hierarchy with a top and bottom to the social gradient. Through my research, I conclude that some students are in that bottom half because of policy, suppression, disadvantaged lifestyles, learning issues, medical reasons and/or complex needs. Some are also there because of the choices they make, i.e. not to accept a culture of submission, to retain some control over time and space and to assert their own individuality. I was initially drawn to think that culture would be the stronger concept in play. I now conclude that it is social class that has had the greater influence on the attainment, behaviour and progress of these students, not least because of the way class manipulates policy to create culture as a means of exerting control and compliance.

What is now missing from this discussion is an understanding of the impact of pupil referral units on the later choices and opportunities open to the students as adults who experienced learning in this way. It would be illuminating to explore at what stage they rejoined mainstream society (if they did at all), what significant events or people influenced those choices and their reflections on past, present and future life-courses and material position.

As this piece of work draws to a close, I reflect on what has been the most significant finding of the enterprise. From an academic perspective I believe it has been to illustrate that class, culture and individual agency are responsible for educational failure but, at a more personal level and through this research, I have come to realize - and accept - that unwittingly I have been complicit in these failings and instead of levelling out the playing field as I believed I was through my different roles, I have in fact contributed to perpetuating and reproducing social inequalities. I bought into the middle class meritocratic values seeking qualifications and opportunities for career progression, and once established in that career choice, I used the systems and structures to persuade and entice unwilling learners to join the establishment. I finish this task now sadly realising that I had acquired this understanding at the wrong end of my career, and wishing I had acquired it at the point when my sphere of professional influence was at it's greatest.

Appendices

🌐 Please note the use of the following symbols ✪✪✪ to mask identifying detail and protect anonymity.

A critical ethnographic approach based on the model identified by Carspeken and Apple(1992) and Carspeken (1996) with recommended validation measures from the authors and others as shown.

Stages in critical ethnography (Carspeken and Apple (1992) and Carspeken 1996)	Validity checks may include using:
1. Compiling the primary record through the collection of objective data from a participant observer role (monological i.e. field notes).	- multiple recoding devices and/or observers - a flexible observation schedule - a longitudinal study to avoid the Hawthorne effect - low-inference descriptors - peer de-briefing - respondent validation. *(Lincoln and Guba 1985)*
2. Preliminary reconstructive analysis which is the identification of the underpinning values, norms and concepts of the situation by reverting to the preliminary stage for meaning (reconstruction) in interaction, relationships and events to expose cultural, social and system influences	- interviews and group discussions with the participants - member checks to balance power relations - use a peer to validate the reconstructions - invest sufficient time to become an 'insider' - cross check themes and samples of data with the primary record for consistency - apply negative case analysis'. (Carspeken 1996)
3. Dialogical data collection whereby data is produced and is the basis of discussion between the participants and the researcher. This stage deviates from the naturalistic approach and enables 'voice', thus democratising the research	- consistency checks on recorded interviews - follow-up interviews with participants - matching what was seen with what was said - avoiding leading questions monitored by peer de-briefers - checking back with the participants and encouraging explanation. (Carspeken 1996, Hollway and Jefferson 2000)
4. Discovering system relations between the participants and factors that affect them particularly in cultural terms	- maintaining previous validity checks - making links between what was said (participants) and the analysis of what was observed (researcher) - peer de-briefing - participant validation (Carspeken 1996)
5. Using system relations to explain findings, matching the research outcomes within a social theory progressing through description, understanding, questioning and finally resulting in changing behaviour.	as above.

Organisation's authorisation to progress with research   Appendix B

Thursday, 26 August, 2010 9:13:35
RE: Consent request please
From: "✪✪✪Jim" <Jim.✪✪✪@ ✪✪✪.gov.uk>View

To: BETTY ELLIS MARTIN <betty.ellismartin@ ✪✪✪com>

Hi Betty

I am happy for you to proceed with this research as outlined in your e mail.

Best wishes

Jim ✪✪✪
Chair of ✪✪✪Management Committee

From: BETTY ELLIS MARTIN [mailto:betty.ellismartin@ ✪✪✪com]
Sent: 25 August 2010 16:31
To: ✪✪✪, Jim
Subject: Consent request please

Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)

Study Title: Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and behaviour in a KS4 PRU

Dear Jim,

I have been studying with Keele University for the last two years as part of my preparations to complete a doctorate programme, hopefully at the end of next year. So far, I have completed all my assignments successfully and I plan to conduct the the formal research project during this coming year. As part of the above programme, I am investigating some factors that have possibly influenced and impacted on the social relationships and student progress within the Pupil Referral Unit.

Before I can proceed any further, I have to apply to Keele's Ethical Review Panel. For this, I need your consent as Chair of the Management Committee please, granting me permission because I am involving students and staff in the investigations.

I have attached copies of the letters/consent forms that I will be issuing to the staff and students who are chosen to participate so that you are aware of what is planned. I will also be following the BERA Code of Practice for this work.

Should you have any questions or wish any further information, please call me on: 07528969401 or email me at: ✪✪✪

My Keele tutor is Dr Yvonne Hill,
Director of Learning and Teaching
School of Public Policy and Professional Practice
Social Science PGCE Programme Leader
Chancellor's Building
Keele University
Staffordshire
ST5 5BG   Telephone: 01782 734 383   email: y.hill@educ.keele.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the research then please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton
Research and Governance Officer
Research and Enterprise Services Dorothy Hodgkin Building
Keele University
ST5 5BG

I look forwards to hearing from you,

Best Regards,

Betty Ellis-Martin
Headteacher: ✪✪✪

<u>Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)</u>

Information Sheet - Students

Study Title:

Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Aims of the Research:

The aims of the research are to help all staff in the PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) to understand their students better and to help us to help you make more progress and better choices when you leave at 16.

Invitation:

I would like to invite you to take part in the research study which is being conducted by me: Mrs E A Ellis-Martin, Headteacher, ✪✪✪PRU, ✪✪✪, for a doctoral qualification with Keele University.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this

research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and

discuss it with teachers, friends and relatives if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is unclear or

if you would like more information.

Why have I been chosen?

We have over sixty students on roll at the PRU at the moment and this is too many for me to work with for a research project. In order to make the project manageable, I have decided to work with a group of around 10 – 12 students who are representative of all the students we have that attend regularly.

I have chosen you by using information from the SATs results from Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and from our internal teacher assessments whilst you have been at the PRU.

Do I have to take part?

No. You are free to decide whether you wish to take part or not. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign two consent forms, one is for you to keep and the other is for my records. Your parents also have to agree to you taking part. If they do, but you don't want to then that is ok, it is your choice and you don't take part.

You can withdraw consent from this study at any time and without giving reasons. You may also request that all personal data collected during your participation in the project is destroyed and no longer used in the project.

What will happen if I do take part?

Either I or a colleague who will be helping me will meet with you (in groups of 4 – 6 students) to explain a bit more about what the project is about and the timetable arrangements. The discussions will most likely take place during some PSHE lessons so that exam subjects aren't disrupted, or for part-time students we may be able to agree a time outside of the taught curriculum. I will agree this with you and then write to your parents to confirm the arrangements so that you both know what is happening and when. If you don't turn up for these meetings, I will ask you why and let your parents know that you missed the sessions too.

I anticipate 2 or 3 group discussions of approximately 45 minutes long over a six week period, and then possibly followed by two 20 mins individual interviews about a week apart.

With the exception of one small written task (to create a family tree of occupations), you won't have to write or record anything – that will be up to me or my colleague to do. An audio recording device (not video) may be used or notes taken during the meeting.

Your responses will be confidential (unless you say things that means you are at risk of harm or illegal activity – in which case I have to notify your parents and possibly the Social Services Safeguarding Team or Police). You will not be identified in the research. Your responses will be used to show patterns and trends as part of a group of responses for this particular piece of research only.

If I take part, what do I have to do?

Prior to the discussion groups and individual interviews, I will ask you to draw up a 'family tree' of occupations and your parents and grandparents may be able to help you with this. This activity will be used to talk about the career choices you are hoping for and why.

In the discussion groups and interviews, you will be able to say what you think and feel about the things or people that help or get in the way of you making progress in learning and behaviour. What works for you and what doesn't? You should describe your opinions honestly and as you see and understand things. The discussions will cover such topics as teachers and teaching, the curriculum, the impact of other students, behaviour and discipline.

You will also need to will need to complete a consent form which I will give you before the first session takes place.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

You will be able to say what has worked well for you and what hasn't while you have been at the PRU, and this will help me and the staff to make good changes to the way we run the PRU.

You will gain good experience in expressing yourself in a group and in an interview situation. This may lead to improved confidence in these situations.

The outcomes may help other PRUs in different authorities to improve their work with similar aged students.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

There shouldn't be any.

However:

- If, through the group or individual discussions, you say anything that leads me to believe you could be in danger, at risk of harm or involved in illegal activities, then I have a duty of care to inform your parents and possibly report my concerns to the police or local Safeguarding Team's Helpdesk for advice and guidance.

- If you should become worried or concerned about any aspect of the discussions, then the PRU's student counsellor (Youth Worker: Angie Randall) will be available to you for 1:1 support. Contact details will be provided before the project starts.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to me and I will do my best to answer your questions and concerns. You can do this in person by arranging an appointment through the PRU Admin Officer: ✪✪✪on ✪✪✪; by phone on ✪✪✪, or e-mail to me: ✪✪✪

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you or your son/daughter have been approached or treated during the course of the study please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:-

Nicola Leighton
Research Governance Officer
Research & Enterprise Services
Dorothy Hodgkin Building
Keele University
ST5 5BG
E-mail: n.leighton@uso.keele.ac.uk
Tel: 01782 733306

How will information about me be used?

The collection, storage and processing of data for this project will be undertaken in strict accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Personal data will only be collected for the purposes specified within the project, processed in line with your rights, stored securely and not kept for longer than is necessary.

The information will be used to identify patterns in behaviour and attitudes so that the staff team can improve the way it works with young people, so that we can make better use of the resources we have and to make sure that the curriculum enables students to refine or develop important personal and social skills for when they leave the PRU.

Information will be gathered from:

- the information already stored in the LA's management information systems (prior attainment, attendance, behaviour log, exclusion data, multi-agency interventions and outcomes), police and Youth Offending Services.
- what you say during discussion sessions and individual interviews
- policy documents
- the researcher's personal journals

At this stage there are no plans to use the data beyond this piece of research.

Who will have access to this information about me?

In a professional capacity, the teaching team and Local Authority officers/agencies already have access to your previous school and attainment data and the involvement of multi-agency teams through the CAF and TAC protocols.   The detailed information on file will remain confidential to those groups involved.

The learning and behaviour issues identified through your previous schools; the past and present connection with outside agencies since the age of 7 yrs (Key Stage 1), will be used by me to show background patterns to the lives of the students and will not identify anyone or their families in person, or make judgements about them. It will be used to show the general characteristics of the type of student who attends the PRU.

Any quotes used from the group sessions and interviews will be used to illustrate themes and individuals and their families will remain anonymous.

This information will be stored securely either in a locked filing cabinet and/or on a password protected computer.

Who is funding and organising the research?

I am paying my own tuition fees and my employers, ✪✪✪Local Authority, are supporting with study days throughout the year.

Contact for further information

My Keele tutor is:

Dr Yvonne Hill,
Director of Learning and Teaching
School of Public Policy and Professional Practice
Social Science PGCE Programme Leader
Chancellor's Building
Keele University

Staffordshire
ST5 5BG
Telephone: 01782 734 383
email: y.hill@educ.keele.ac.uk

Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)

Study Title: Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 PRU

June 2011

Dear Student:

I am studying for a doctorate qualification at Keele University and as part of the course I have to do a research project. I have chosen to investigate what sorts of things affect the way staff and students get on with one another and how much this affects student progress in the PRU.

I would like to invite you to consider being a participant.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the information sheet carefully and discuss it with teachers, friends and relatives if you wish. For each participant, the study will involve some group discussion sessions to start with, an initial interview with one or two follow–up meetings shortly afterwards. Access to the information provided by you will be restricted to me and a colleague who is helping me gather information; and at the end of the study your responses will be anonymous. Any quotes used from the interviews will be subject to your consent to use them and will only be used to illustrate themes, trends and patterns.

Taking part in this study is voluntary and without prejudice. You would be free to withdraw at any time if you want to and you don't have to give any reasons for doing so.

Should you have any questions or wish any further information, please arrange a convenient time to see me with ✪✪✪ (Administration Officer at ✪✪✪).

My Keele tutor is:
Dr Yvonne Hill,
Director of Learning and Teaching
School of Public Policy and Professional Practice
Social Science PGCE Programme Leader
Chancellor's Building
Keele University
Staffordshire
ST5 5BG   Telephone: 01782 734 383   email: y.hill@educ.keele.ac.uk

If you are unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study then please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton
Research and Governance Officer
Research and Enterprise Services
Dorothy Hodgkin Building
Keele University
ST5 5BG

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for considering taking part in the research.   If you are happy to take part, please would you sign and return a copy of the attached consent forms to me in the envelope provided.

Yours sincerely,

Betty Ellis-Martin
Headteacher: ✪✪✪KS4 PRU

Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)

Study Title: Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 PRU

CONSENT FORM (1)

Please return to: Mrs. Betty Ellis-Martin, Headteacher of ✪✪✪. *(Principal Investigator)*

1. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and have received satisfactory answers to any questions I have asked.	☐
2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time, without explanation, by telling the researcher.	☐
3. I understand that only the researchers will have access to the personal information provided and that information will be stored securely and used only for the purposes of the research.	☐
4. I understand that information collected during this study will be anonymised before it is submitted for publication.	☐
5. I agree to take part in this study	☐
6. I agree to audio-taping recording of the interviews and give my permission for the tape to be used for transcription, analysis and and as part of the researcher's studies at Keele University	☐

Name of research participant (print)

Signature _____   Date _____

Name of researcher (print)

Betty Ellis-Martin   Signature *Betty Ellis-Martin*   Date 4.5.11

☐ Original to researcher participant   ☐ Copy for research

K E E L E
UNIVERSITY

Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)

Study Title: Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 PRU

CONSENT FORM (2)   (for use of quotes)

Please return to: Mrs Betty Ellis-Martin, ✪✪✪. *(Principal Investigator)*

Please tick box

1	I agree for any quotes to be used	☐
2	I don't want any quotes to be used	☐
3	I want to see any proposed quotes before making a decision	☐

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   Date   Signature

K E E L E
U N I V E R S I T Y

Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)

Information Sheet - Parents

Study Title:

Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Aims of the Research:

The aims of the research are to help all staff in the PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) to understand their students better and to help them make more progress and better choices when they leave at 16.

Invitation:

Your son/daughter is being invited to take part in the research study which is being conducted by me: Mrs E A Ellis-Martin, Headteacher, ✪✪✪, for a doctoral qualification with Keele University.

Before you decide whether or not you wish your child to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

Why has my son/daughter been chosen?

We currently have over sixty students on roll at the PRU and this is too big a group to work with for a research project. To make the project more manageable, I have decided to work with a group of around 10 – 12 students who are representative of all the students we have that attend regularly.

I have chosen your son/daughter using information from the SATs results from Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and from our internal teacher assessments whilst they have been at the PRU.

Does my son/daughter have to take part?

No. You are free to decide whether you wish your son/daughter to take part and even if you are willing to allow them to take part, they can choose not to. If you do decide to give consent, you will be asked to sign two consent forms, one is for you to keep and the other is for my records. You and your son/daughter can withdraw consent from this study at any time and without giving reasons. You may also request that all personal data collected during your son/daughter's participation in the project is destroyed and no longer used in the project.

What will happen if my son/daughter does take part?

Either I, or a colleague who will be helping me will meet with the students (in groups of 4 – 6 students) to explain a bit more about what the project is about and the timetable arrangements. The discussions will most likely take place during some PSHE lessons so that exam subjects aren't disrupted, or for part-time students we may be able to agree a time outside of the taught curriculum. I will write to you nearer the start of the project to confirm arrangements so that you know what is happening and when. If your son/daughter doesn't turn up for these meetings, I will let you know too.

I anticipate probably 2 or 3 group discussions of approximately 45 minutes long over a six week period, and then possible followed by two 20 mins interviews approximately a week apart.

With the possible exception of one small written task (to create a family tree of occupations), the students won't have to write or record anything – that will be up to me or my colleague to do. An audio recording device (not video) may be used or notes taken during the meeting.

The responses the students make will be confidential (unless they tell me things that means that they are at risk of harm or illegal activity – in which case I have to notify Social Services Safeguarding Team or Police). The students will not be identified in the research. Their responses will be used to show patterns and trends as part of a group of responses for this particular piece of research only.

If we take part, what does my son/daughter have to do?

Prior to the discussion groups and individual interviews, I will ask the students to draw up a 'family tree' of occupations and you may be able to help them with this. This will be used to get them thinking about the career choices they are hoping for and why.

Then they need to talk to me or my colleague. I am interested in what our students think and feel about the things or people that help or get in the way of them making progress in their learning and behaviour.   What works for them and what doesn't? Your son/daughter should describe their views honestly and as they see and understand things. These discussions will take place through the structured discussions and individual interviews and will cover such topics as teachers and teaching, the curriculum, the impact of other students, behaviour and discipline.

You will also need to will need to complete a consent letter which I will give to you before the first session takes place.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

The students will have a voice, a say in what has worked well for them and what hasn't and this will help me and the staff to make good changes to the way we run the PRU.

The students who take part will gain good experience in expressing themselves in a group and in an interview situation. This may lead to improved confidence in these situations.

The outcomes may help other PRUs in different authorities to improve their work with similar aged students.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

None are anticipated.
However:

- If, through the course of discussions, any issues relating to students safety and welfare are identified, then I have a duty of care to inform you and possibly report the concerns to the Local Safeguarding Team's Helpdesk for advice and guidance.

- If any student becomes worried or concerned about any aspect of the discussions, then the PRU's student counsellor (Youth Worker: ✪✪✪) will be available to the student for 1:1 support. Contact details will be provided before the project starts.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to me and I will do my best to answer your questions and concerns. You can do this in person by arranging an appointment through the PRU Admin Officer: ✪✪✪; by phone on ✪✪✪or e-mail to me ✪✪✪

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you or your son/daughter have been approached or treated during the course of the study please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:-

Nicola Leighton
Research Governance Officer
Research & Enterprise Services
Dorothy Hodgkin Building
Keele University
ST5 5BG
E-mail: n.leighton@uso.keele.ac.uk
Tel: 01782 733306

How will information about my son/daughter be used?

The collection, storage and processing of data for this project will be undertaken in strict accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Personal data will only be collected for the purposes specified within the project, processed in line with your rights, stored securely and not kept for longer than is necessary.

The information will be used to identify patterns in behaviour and attitudes so that the staff team can improve the way it works with young people, so that we can make better use of the resources we have and to make sure that the curriculum enables students to refine or develop important personal and social skills for when they leave the PRU.

Information will be gathered from:

- the information already stored in the LA's management information systems (prior attainment, attendance, behaviour log, exclusion data, multi-agency interventions and outcomes), police and Youth Offending Services.
- what students say during discussion sessions and individual interviews

- policy documents
- the researcher's personal journals

At this stage there are no plans to use the data beyond this piece of research.

Who will have access to this information about my son/daughter?

In a professional capacity, the teaching team and Local Authority officers/agencies already have access to previous school and attainment data and the involvement of multi-agency teams through the CAF and TAC protocols. The detailed information on file will remain confidential to those groups involved.

The learning and behaviour issues identified through previous schools; the past and present connection with outside agencies since the age of 7 yrs (Key Stage 1), will be used by me to show background patterns to the lives of the students and will not identify anyone or their families in person, or make judgements about them. It will be used to show the general characteristics of the type of student who attends the PRU.

Any quotes used from the group sessions and interviews will be used to illustrate themes and individuals and their families will remain anonymous.

This information will be stored securely either in a locked filing cabinet and/or on a password protected computer.

Who is funding and organising the research?

I am paying my own tuition fees and my employers, ✪✪✪, are supporting with study days throughout the year.

Contact for further information

My Keele tutor is:

Dr Yvonne Hill,
Director of Learning and Teaching
School of Public Policy and Professional Practice
Social Science PGCE Programme Leader
Chancellor's Building
Keele University
Staffordshire
ST5 5BG
Telephone: 01782 734 383

email: y.hill@educ.keele.ac.uk

Keele University Doctorate in Education Programme (EdD)

Study Title: Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 PRU

CONSENT FORM
Please return to: ✪✪✪.

1. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and have received satisfactory answers to any questions I have asked.	☐
2. I understand that the participation of my son/daughter in the study is voluntary and that I, or my son/daughter, may withdraw from the study at any time, without explanation, by advising the researcher	☐
3. I understand that only the researchers will have access to the personal data provided, that data will be stored securely and used only for research purposes.	☐
4. I understand that information collected during this study will be anonymised before it is submitted for publication.	☐
5. I am happy for my son/daughter to take part in the focus groups and interviews for this study'	☐
6. I agree to audio-taping recording of the interviews and give my permission for the tape to be used for transcription, analysis and and as part of the researcher's studies at Keele University	☐

Name of research participant (print):

Name of Parent/Guardian (print):

Signature _____   Date _____

Name of researcher (print)

Betty Ellis-Martin   Signature *Betty Ellis-Martin*   Date:
4.5.11

☐ Original to researcher   ☐ Copy for research participant

ACADEMIC SERVICES DIRECTORATE
RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES

31 January 2011

Mrs Betty Ellis-Martin
10 Drayton Mill Court
Cheshire Street
Market Drayton
Shropshire
TF9 1EF

Dear Betty

Re: 'Choice, chance or unintended consequences: to what extent is student progress affected by issues of class, culture and resistance in a KS4 PRU

Thank you for submitting your revised project for review.

I am pleased to inform you that your project has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel.

Amendments to your project after a favourable ethical opinion has been given or if the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application (June 2011) you must notify the Ethical Review Panel via Michele Dawson.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Michele Dawson in writing to m.dawson@uso.keele.ac.uk

Yours sincerely

Dr Nicky Edelstyn
Chair – Ethics Review Panel.

cc RI Manager

Mrs Elizabeth Ellis-Martin
10 Drayton Mill
Cheshire Street
Market Drayton
Shropshire
TF9 1EF

13 November 2013

Dear Mrs Ellis-Martin

Re: Approved Thesis Title

I am writing to confirm the approved title for your thesis. The following title has been approved by your Research Institute Committee:

Dare to be different, dare to progress: a case study of a Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit 2009-12

This is the title that should appear on your thesis when you submit it for examination. It must be reproduced exactly as above taking particular care with upper and lower case. It should not be varied without consent from your Research Institute Committee. Please note that your thesis cannot be accepted for submission if the title is different from that printed above.

Please contact me in the Records and Examinations office or email c.e.greaves@keele.ac.uk if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Greaves
Records and Examinations Officer

Cc: Director of Postgraduate Research
        RI Postgraduate Administrator

Stages of the research with timelines - overview   **Appendix F**

Stage	Tasks	Timetable
Literature Review	• Reading and assimilating information. • Identify the conceptual and theoretical framework • Formulating the research questions. • Identifying the research approach and selected tools	Jan 2014
Securing permissions and consents	• Preparing information documents, invitations and consent forms • Approach to Chair of Management Committee • Completing the proposal • Application to Ethics Committee • Sharing with staff my interest in the research • Ethics approval granted	Sept 2010 Sept/Oct 2010 PD Day Jan 2011
The pilot	• Selected approach – Carspeken and Apples's model (1992) • Assemble the quantitative the data (spreadsheet). Sources: PRU database (CMIS), LA assessment and exclusions teams, police and YOS databases. • Feed this information to staff as part of the school improvement agenda for interventions and tracking activities • Development of question schedule for staff and students • Identifying the target student group • Preparation of Deputy Head to interface in recruitment of participants	Autumn term 2010
	• Meet with the student volunteers and explain in more detail the purpose of the research and why they have been invited to participate (ensure understanding of the formal invitation and consents including the right to decline or withdraw). • Contact parents for their consent for their children to participate.	Jan 2011
	• Student interviews – individuals (3 agreed, but 2 participated) • Staff interviews – former colleagues (2) • Review/rewrite questions for staff and students and pilot again (2 students, 1 former colleague) • Up-date the quantitative data • Review the approach and modify	Feb 2011
The full research study	• Request staff volunteers – for full study, set date for those willing to participate. Agreed to do this as a group of teachers and a group of teaching assistants. • Discussions with Deputy Head to prepare for recruitment of student participants • Deputy Head approached students for volunteers • Meeting with students to issue and explain documentation • Information and consents to parents. • Discuss with student participants how they would like to be interviewed – agreed this to be in pairs. • Publish schedule of meetings – staff and students, to include two planned meetings • Issued students with disposable cameras	March 2011 April 2011 Summer term 2011

	• Informed Keele of slippage of fieldwork dates and requested extension into Autumn term 2011. • Complete interviews, type up transcripts before returning a respective draft copy to each participants for checking accuracy and understanding • Up-date raw quantitative data spreadsheet • Analysis of data • Writing up first full draft • Finalise thesis title • Redraft • Submission	Spring term 2012 Easter 2012 June 2013 Nov 2013 Jan 2014 March 2014

The detailed data **Appendix G1**

Yr 11 09/10

Gender	Student identifier	Class group	PEX Status	KS1 S&L	KS1 Read	KS1 Write	KS1 Maths	KS1 Sci	KS2 Eng	KS2 Math	KS2 Sci	KS3 Eng	KS3 Math	KS3 Sci	EngLit Mock	EngLit Tgt	EngLit Act	Eng Mock	Eng Tgt	Eng Act	Maths Mock	Maths Tgt	Maths Act	L&T Mock	L&T Tgt	L&T Act	Art Mock	Art Tgt	Art Act	RS Mock	RS Tgt	RS Act	Pts Est	Pts Act	Pts Avg	FFT B 5A*-C incE&M	FFT B 5A*-C	FFT B 5A*-G incE&M	FFT B 5A*-G	FFT D 5A*-C incE&M	FFT D 5A*-C	FFT D 5A*-G incE&M	FFT D 5A*-G	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Yr summary	Mod TT	Hrs offered	Hrs total	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Age 1st excl	Reason for exclusion/ placement	SEN	SEN need	Post-16 Destinations	EWS	YOS	Police	CiC	FSM	IMD	Pov
M	0910/8	Satellite		3	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	A	A	A			E	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	U		X	X				120	108	18	73.18	91.64	99.15	99.37	80.03	94.05	99.32	99.58	39.86	100	54.05		Y	23	25	(1)	(1)				BESD	FE						20-30%	M
M	0910/9	Satellite							B	B	3	5	4	4				EL		Pass	EL		Pass	X		X		U	X															31.16	100	39.42			19	19	(1)	(1)	12	Persistent disruptive behaviour	S	VI/PD	TP			Victim + Bail			40-50%	L
F	0910/10	Satellite							B	B	B							EL		Pass	EL		Pass	X		G		X	X															37.68	100	35.07			15	15	(1)	(1) + Elective Home Educated (EHE)				P	MLD/BESD	TP		Y				40-50%	M
F	0910/11	Satellite		2	1	1	2	2	4	4	5	5	6	5			B	C	B	A	D	C	C	B	B	F/G	D		C		B	A	172	216	30.9									39.86	100	41.45			15	15	(1)				P	BESD	FE						40-50%	M
M	0910/12	Satellite																F	E	E	G	F	E	G	F	X		X				72	56	11.2									32.5	100	63.56	Y		25	25					P	BESD	FE						20-30%	M
M	0910/13	Satellite		2	3	2	2		4	4	5							G	C	E	E	C	D	G	F	U		X			B	A	102	114	19									66.67	100	56.52			18	18		(2) + Medical PRU;	13	Other	P	BESD	FE			Victim			40-50%	L
F	0910/14	Satellite							B	N	3							EL		Pass	EL		Pass	U		G		X	X				50											50	100	45.38			15	15	(1)	(1) + EHE				P	MLD/BESD	FE		YOS				10-20%	M
M	0910/15	Satellite																																0												0	15	15	(1)				P	BESD	Employment			Present at Domestic				
F	0910/16	Satellite		2	1	1	2					5	3	A																					9.51									6	6	(2)	(2)	14	Persistent disruptive behaviour	P	MLD/BESD			YISP	FW + Victim				
F	0910/17	Satellite		1	2	2	2		4	3	4	L	L	L				D	D	D	G	D	F	G	F	F/G	D	C	E				130	108	21.6									39.74	100	31.93			15	15	(1)	(1) + EHE			FE	Y					40-50%	M
M	0910/18	Satellite		1	2	2	2		N	4	4	T	T	T				EL		Pass	U	G	X	X									38.41	100	43.48			15	15	(1)	(1)			Work-based learning						30-40%	M
M	0910/19	Satellite		2	2	1	2	2	4	4	A	L	L	L				F	E	E	F	C	E	X	X		D	C	X				108	56	11.2									25.36	13.51	25.51			15	15		(1)	12	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD	FE		YOS/YISP	Very 'busy' since 2005			10%	
F	0910/20	Satellite		2	2	2	2		4	4	5	3	4	4				U	E	G	F	D	G	U	G	X	E	D	F				112	43	8.6	0.45	12.5	80.76	84.99	0.66	17.09	83.91	90.9	34.62	100	51.4			25	25	(1)	(1)	14	Other	P	BESD	FE			Victim + FW			10-20%	
F	0910/21	Satellite							4	4	4	4	4	4				E	E		F	E		F	n/a		D	C								3.23	30.59	90.79	93.13	4.68	38.87	92.46	95.82	44.83		47.87				15				A	BESD	Left Dec09							
M	0910/22	Satellite	PEX	3	4																			C																				0	0	0			25	25	(1)	(2) + EHE				P	BESD			Y				30-40%	M
M	0910/23	Satellite		1	2	2	2		3	4	4	4	5	4				G	F	G	G	C	F	F	E	U	F	E	X				118	38	7.6									47.37	100	44.41	Y		21	25					P	MLD/BESD	FE						10-20%	M
M	0910/24	Satellite		1	1	1	1		B	B	B	B	B	B																						0.01	0.69	29.75	34.24	0.01	0.99	34.48	50.86	3.62	0	2.02			15	15	(3)	(2)			S	SPLD	TP			Present at Domestic			10-20%	L
M	0910/25	Satellite																																0												0								P	SLCN								
F	0910/26	Satellite		2	2	2	2		2	2	2	A	A	A				EL		Pass	EL		Pass			X			D				96	0		20.89	57.17	94.74	95.44	27.35	65.53	95.81	97.08	6.52	0	8.09			4	4	(1)	(1)			P	BESD	FE			Present at Domestic			10%	L
M	0910/27	Satellite		2	2	2	3		4	5	5	5	7	6			C	C	A	C	C	C	B	B	B	U	X	X		B	A	138	152	25.3									51.45	100	42.9			18	18	(1)	(1)			P	BESD	FE						40-50%	M
F	0910/28	PRU																F	E	F	U	F	G	U	U	D	C	F				90	49	9.8									41.53	13.16	22.7			15	15		(1)			P	BESD	FE		YOS/YISP	Victim + Charged + Reprimand			20-30%	M
F	0910/29	PRU	PEX						4	4	5	4	5	4				G	U		F	X		U	U	U							38	0											13.51	5.85			18	18	(1)	(2)	14	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against pupil	P	BESD	FE			Witness			20-30%	M
M	0910/30	PRU		2	2	2	2		5	3	4													D									34	0		6.95	49.34	95.15	96.16	9.88	58.43	96.06	97.62	0		0				0	(1)	(1)			P	BESD				Witness			20-30%	M
M	0910/31	PRU		2	2	2	2		N	3	3	3	3	3										F									11.59			0.11	3.85	61.55	66.95	0.17	5.46	66.56	79			12.65				6	(1)	(1)	14	Other	P	BESD	Left Jan10	Y	YOS			Y		
M	0910/32	PRU		2	2	2	2		5	4	4	5	4	5				U	E	E	D	C	D	U	E	U	F	C	F				136	73	14.6									74.64	70.27	59.13			18	18	(2)	(3)	13	Physical assault againt pupil	P	BESD	TP		YISP	Reprimand			10-20%	
M	0910/33	PRU		2	2	2	2		5	4	4							E	C	D	E	C	D	C	C	G/G	E	C	F				160	111	22.2									53.41	65.79	65.54			25	25	(1)	(1)	12	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD						Y	40-50%	M
M	0910/34	PRU	PEX	2	2	1	1		4	4	4	N	3	2				U	F	U	G	D	X	F	E	U	E	D	U				118	0										33.33	18.92	43.19	Y		15	25	(1)	(2)	16	Physical assault againt pupil	P	BESD	FE		YISP	Bail + crim network			20-30%	L
M	0910/35	PRU	PEX	2	2	2	2		3	5	3							E	U	C	F			C	U	F	E	C	F				130	58	11.6									34.06	50	43.06			25	25	(1)	(1)	13	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD	FE			Theft				
M	0910/36	PRU	PEX	2	2	2	2		3	4	3	4	4	4				G	F	F		C	G		G	X	F	E	G				106	46	9.2	0.24	5.18	65.52	72.05	0.36	7.31	70.26	82.55	33.96	29.73	36.1			15	25	(2)	(1)	12	Physical assault againt pupil	P	MLD/BESD	Employment			Present at Domestic + Charged: Drugs + Crimestoppers: assault + Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)			30-40%	
M	0910/37	PRU	PEX	2	2	2	2		3	4	4	A	4	4				U	D	U	G	D	G	D	C	X	E	D	X				142	16	3.2									31.88	26.32	21.1			25	25	(1)	(1)	13	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD	FE					Y	20-30%	L
M	0910/38	PRU		2	2	2	2		3	4	3							U	F	U	F	E	U	F	E	U	F	E	G				106	8	1.6									44.2	24.32	33.04			15	15	(1)	(1)	13	Other	P	SPLD/BESD			YOS/YISP	Pesistent Young Offender + ASB			40-50%	M
M	0910/39	PRU		2	2	2	2		4	4	4	3	5	5				F	F			C											62											25.86	100	25				15							Left: Dec09							
F	0910/40	PRU		3	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	7	7	6						A		B	C							Sc BB			184	61.3										100	100	98.27			?	?	(1)	(2)	14	Persistent disruptive behaviour	P	BESD				Victim			10-20%	L
M	0910/41	PRU		2	2	2	2		5	4	4	5	6	6				E	C	D	C	C	D	C	C	U	E	C	G				160	82	16.4									40.58	36.84	54.05			20	20	(1)	(2)	12	Persistent disruptive behaviour	P	BESD	FE			FW			10%	M
F	0910/42	PRU		1	2	2	2		4	4	4	3	4	4				G	E	U	G	E	U	F	U	F	E	X					106	0		0.23	6.35	69.93	76.07	0.34	8.92	74.3	85.23	25.36	2.7	21.16			15	15	(1)	(2)	12		P	BESD	FE	Y		Victim + Reprimand				
M	0910/43	PRU	PEX	2	2	2	2		4	4	4	5	5	5					F	F		C	F	C	C	U	E	C	F				142	55	11									43.48	45.95	39.42			25	25	(2)	(1)	12	Persistent disruptive behaviour	P	BESD	TP			Victim			20-30%	M
M	0910/44	PRU																																0	0.68											0			10	10	(2)	(1)	12	Physical assault againt pupil	P	BESD	Moved to Wales							
M	0910/45	PRU		2	2	2	2		4	4	4	4	5	4				U	F		G	C	X	G	F		F	E					112	0		1.62	15.02	82	86.49	2.36	20.32	84.99	91.82	42.75	2.63	26.32		Y	25	25	(1)	(2)	14	Physical assault againt pupil	P	BESD	TP			Community Resolution			10%	
M	0910/46	PRU		3	3	3	2	3	5	5	5	8	8	7								B											100	98.27										100	100	98.27			?	?	(1)	(2)	14	Other	P	BESD			YOS	Referral Order			10%	
F	0910/47	PRU	PEX																F	C	U	E		E		F	F/F	D	C	C				112	132	26.4									44.2	35.14	57.97	Y		15	25	(1)	(2)	15	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD	FE			Victim + Present at Domestic			10-20%	M
M	0910/48	PRU	PEX	2	2	2	3		4	4	4	5	6					D	C	F	E	C	F	G	E	U	D	C	E				148	58	11.6	3.43	26.68	89.27	91.81	4.95	34.44	91.18	95.03	36.44	32.43	25.85			25	25	(1)	(2)	13	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD	FE		YISP	Charged + ASB			40-50%	M
M	0910/49	PRU		2	2	2	2		4	4	4	5	6					D	C	G	E	C	D	C	U	D	C	D				160	61	12.2									36.44	21.62	42.15	Y		15	15	(1)	(3)	14	Damage	P	BESD	FE		YOS	Bail + ASB			10-20%	M

Yr 11 09/10 continued

Gender	Student identifier	Class group	PEX Status	KS1 S&L	KS1 Reading	KS1 Writing	KS1 Maths	KS1 Science	KS2 Eng	KS2 Math	KS2 Sci	KS3 Eng	KS3 Math	KS3 Sci	Eng Mock	Eng Target	Eng Actual	Maths Mock	Maths Target	Maths Actual	L&T Mock	L&T Target	Art Mock	Art Target	FFT B 5A*-C inc E&M	FFT B 5A*-C	FFT B 5A*-G inc E&M	FFT B 5A*-G	FFT D 5A*-C inc E&M	FFT D 5A*-C	FFT D 5A*-G inc E&M	FFT D 5A*-G	Autumn	Spring	Summer	year summary	Hours offered	Hours total	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Age at 1st exclusion	Reason for exclusion/placement	SEN	SEN need	Post-16 Destinations	EWS	YOS	Police	FSM	IMD %	IMD M/L
M	0910/1	AP	PEX	2	1	2	1	2	4	3	4	4	3	4																				0		0.29	3	3	(1)	(1)	13	Physical assault against pupil	P	BESD	Home: medical	Y		Suspect			
F	0910/2	AP		2	1	1	1	2	B	B	B	B	B	3																				7.89		14.81	4	4					P	MLD/BESD	Training Provider (TP)						
M	0910/3	AP																																0		0	0	0					P	BESD	Travelling						
M	0910/4	AP	PEX	2	1	1	2	2	3	3	N	A	A	A																			0	0		0	6	6	(1)	(1)	13	Physical assault against pupil	P	BESD	TP			Suspect + ASB		30 - 40%	M
M	0910/5	AP	PEX																															13.16		10.69	11	11	(1)	(2)	12	Persistent disruptive behaviour	P	BESD			YOS	Charged			
F	0910/6	AP		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	A	A	A																				0		0.58	4	4	(1)	(2) + Medical PRU;	13	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	SPLD/BESD		Y				10 - 20%	M
M	0910/7	AP										A	A	A											0.07	2.39	51.3	58.08	0.11	3.42	56.7	72.4	0.72	0		8.38	15	15		(2)			P	BESD	FE					40 - 50%	L
M	0910/50	AP	PEX	1	2	2	1	1	3	3	4	4	4	4																				73.53		66.98	25	25	(2)	(1)	12	Physical assault against pupil	P	BESD	Work based training			Reprimand + ASB			
F	0910/51	AP	PEX	1	2	2	2	2	4	3	4	4	4	3																			84.78	73.53		84.21	25	25			15	Other	P	BESD	Work based training	Y		Carrying Knife		10%	M
F	0910/52	AP							4	3	A				D	C	X	G	D	X	X	X	X	X									32.61	6.45		13.87	25	25	(1)	(5)	13	Physical assault against adult	P	BESD	FE		YISP	Reprimand		20 - 30%	L
M	0910/53	AP	PEX	2	1	1	1	2	3	N	3	N	2	3																			35.51	41.18		42.69	15	15	(1)	(1)	13	Physical assault against pupil	P	BESD	TP		YISP	Reprimand		20 - 30%	M
F	0910/54	AP							3	3	3																						2.13			2.13							P		Left:Sept09						
M	0910/55	AP																															0			0							P	MLD	Left:July09						
M	0910/56	AP		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4																			55.8	29.41		32.16	25	25	(2)	(2)			P	BESD	FE	Y				10 - 20%	M
F	0910/57	AP		2	2	2	2	1	3	4	4	4	4	4																			97.1	76.47		71.64	25	25	(1)	(1)	13	Physical assault against pupil	P	MLD/BESD	TP		YOS	Charged			
M	0910/58	AP	PEX	2	1	2	2	2	3	N	3	4	4	4																			1.45	0		1.22	0	0	(3)	(3)	12	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	S	MLD/BESD	Left: Jan10		YOS	Charged		40 - 50%	L
M	0910/59	AP	PEX	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	N	3	3																			10.87	11.76		5.56	10	10	(2)	(1)	12	Physical assault againt adult	P	BESD	TP			Possession: Drugs		10%	M
M	0910/60	AP		1	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	N	3	A											0.06	2.64	54.45	59.98	0.09	3.77	59.77	73.86	10.14	0		4.05	6	6	(1)	(1)	13	Persistent disruptive behaviour	P	MLD/BESD			YISP	Victim		20 - 30%	M
F	0910/61	AP		3	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	5	N	N																			3.62	2.94		2.92	10	10	(2)	(2)	13	Persistent disruptive behaviour	A	BESD	NEET			Victim			
M	0910/62	AP		3	2	2	2	2	4	4	5	5	A	5																			17.39	0		6.94			(1)	(2)	14	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	P	BESD	Employment					10%	M

Yr 11 10/11

Key stage groups: Key stage 1 | Key Stage 2 | Key Stage 3 | Key Stage 4 - current education performance/provision | Key Stage 4 - Contextual Information | Poverty Indicators

Gender	Student identifier	Class group	PEX Status	S&L	Read	Write	Maths	Sci	KS2 Eng	KS2 Math	KS2 Sci	KS3 Eng	KS3 Math	KS3 Sci	Eng P	Eng T	Eng A	Math P	Math T	Math A	Sci P	Sci T	Sci A	prior	Pts Est	Pts Act	Pts Avg	FFT Cat B baseline	FFT Cat D aspirational	Att Autumn	Att Spring	Att Summer	Hrs offered	Hrs total	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Age at 1st exclusion	Reason for exclusion/placement	SEN	SEN need	CAF/TAC	YOS	Police	CiC	Free School Meals	IMD
M	1011/1	PRU		2	1	2	2	2	3	4	4	3	4	4	D	E	F	D	D	E	E	D	G		136	66	22	17.74 50.86 94.34 96.19	24.06 59.9 95.4 97.64	44.2	21.05	94	15	15	(1)	(1)	14	Drug & Alcohol related	SA+			YISP	FW (drugs)		40-50%	L
F	1011/2	PRU		3	2a	2a	3		5	4	5	5		A	F	C	D	D	D	E	F	C	G		78	78	26.3	22.63 63.23 96.45 97.5	30.06 71.28 97.12 98.42	43.43	42.11	47	18	18	(1)	(3)			SA+		Y		Suspect (assault) + Victim		40-50%	L
F	1011/3	PRU		1	2	2	2	1	3	3	3					E		G	E	G		E			16	16	16					6.78				(1) + Out of County		SA+			YOS	Victim + assault charges + theft + ASB		10%	M
M	1011/4	PRU	PEX	3	2	1	2	2	4	4	5	4	6	5	G	D	G	D	F		E	C			66	54	16					0				(1)		Victim	SA+		Y				30-40%	M
M	1011/5	PRU	PEX	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	D	D	F	E	D	F	E	D	G		84	60	20					83				(1)		FW - Theft	SA+						30-40%	M
F	1011/6	PRU							N	N	N	N	3	4	E	E	F	F	E	G	G	E	U		66	38	17.6					73				(1)		Suspect (drugs) + witness/victim	SA+		Y				30-40%	M
M	1011/7	PRU	PEX	2	1	1	2	2	N	3	3	3	4	5	E	G	U	E	G	G	G	E	U		32	32	10.7					80				(1)		No criminal files - witness to domestic violence	SA+		Y				10-20%	M
M	1011/8	PRU		1	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	F	F	F	F	E	G	G	E	G		60	54	18					EHE				EHE		ASB + burglary	SA+						10%	M
M	1011/9	PRU		2	1	1	2	2	4	3	4				G	D	F	E	E	F	D	D	F		78	66	22			31.82	34.21	91	15	25	(3)	(3) + KS3 PRU	12	Physical assault against pupil	SA+	MLD/BESD		YISP	Suspect (burglary) + ASB + suspect (crim damage) + burglary		10%	M
M	1011/10	PRU													G	G	U	G	G	G	U	G	U		16	16	7.5									(1)						Y					
F	1011/11	PRU	PEX	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	3	4	4	4	E	E	F	F	E	G	G	E	U		66	38	17.6	0.83 12.71 80.46 85.17	1.21 17.36 83.66 91.01	36.6	36.84	84	15	25	(1)	(2)	13	Physical assault against pupil	SA+	BESD		YISP	Victim + FW (assault) + possession of weapon		10-20%	M
F	1011/12	PRU		2	2	2	3	3	5	4	5				C	C	F	F	D	X	E	C	G	P	130	38	19				40.58	86	15	25	(1)	(1)	13	ASB (criminal damage) + victim (assault)	SA+	BESD	Y	YISP			10%	M
M	1011/13	PRU	PEX	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	3	4	D	G	G	G	D	U	G	D	G		48	32	10.7			0		0				(1)			SA	BESD					20-30%	M
F	1011/14	PRU		2	1	2	1	2	3	4	3	3	5	5	E			D			E											1.09				(1)			SA+						30-40%	M
M	1011/15	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4				G	D	F	F	D	F	F	D	F	P	100	66	22			41.3	39.47	93	18	18	(1)	(3) + KS3 PRU	11	Physical assault against pupil	S	BESD	Y	YISP	2 Reprimands (theft) + domestic		10-20%	M
M	1011/16	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	3	5	4	F	D	F	F	D	F	F	D	F		66	66	22									(1)			SA+				Went onto school site following exclusion		40-50%	M
F	1011/17	PRU													C	C	F	C	C	C	C	C	C	P	160	96	32								(1)				No criminal record. Intel: warnings (drugs) + reported missing								
M	1011/18	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	4	E	E	X	G	E	X	F	E	U		60	0	0					0				(1)			SA+				Victim + Intel: selling imported russian missile ammo		30-40%	M
M	1011/19	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	G	E	F	D	D	E	G	E	U		66	50	15	0.6 2 47.57 54.53	0.09 2.85 53.01 69.57	44.93	56.76	87	27	27	(2)	(1)	11	Physical assault against pupil	In progress	BESD	Y		Dealing heroin + loitering in bus-stops + parent known to police.		20-30%	M
M	1011/20	PRU	PEX	3	2	1	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	6	D	E	E	G	E	F	E	D	G	P	118	66	22					50				(1)	(1)			SA+		Y		Reprimands + witness to Domestic Violence (parents) + victim (harrasment)		20-30%	M
M	1011/21	AP		1	1	1	2	1	3	4	3	3	3	4	E			D			E				0	0	10				74.29	69.68	15	15	(2)	(3)	13	Verbal abuse/threatening behavior towards an adult	SA+	BESD		YISP	Reprimand + FW (theft) + witness (assaults)		20-30%	M
M	1011/22	AP		2	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	3	6	2	E			D			E				0	0	10	0.72 4.29 56.19 68.85	1.05 6.07 61.45 80.35	44.2	42.11	86	15	25	(1)	(1)	12	Physical assault against pupil	SA+	SPLD/BESD	Y	YISP	Reprimand (assault)		10-20%	M
F	1011/23	AP		1	1	2	2	1	3	3	3				E			E			E				0	0	0			44.2	21.05	36.13	18	18	(2)	(1)	13	Persistent disruptive behaviour	SA+	BESD	Y		Reprimand + FW + involved in domestic falling out with boyfriend - used police as 'Samaritans'		10%	M
F	1011/24	AP		2	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	E			E			E				0	0	0	2.62 14.22 72.25 79.09	3.69 19.1 76.79 86.82	48.33	26.32	94	15	25	(1)	(2)	14	Other	SA+		Y		Bailed (theft) + Victim (rape) + FN (theft)		10-20%	M
M	1011/25	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	A	A	A	D			F	D	F	D				0	22	16.9				17.65	28.88	25	25	(1)	(1)	11	Damage	SA+	BESD		YISP	Suspect (possession of offensive weapon) + Suspect (stealing pedal cycle) + 'choice associates'		20-30%	M
F	1011/27	AP							4	4	5				D			D			C				0	0	0			24.64	0	37.39	15	25	(1)	(3) + EHE	14	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	SA+		Y	YISP	Domestic Incident + missing + Reprimand (assault) + hoax call		10-20%	M
M	1011/28	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	3	4				D			E			D				0	0	0			3.62	2.63	6.65	15	25	(1)	(1)	11	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	SA+		Y	YISP	Charged (handling stolen property) + ASB + bailed (taking pedal cycle) + criminal damage + suspect (burglary) + Bail (assault) + associates with known criminals + abuse incident (to mother)		10%	M
M	1011/29	AP	PEX	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3				E			E			E				0	0	6.7			32.61	21.05	35.84	25	25	(1)	(1)	12	Persistent disruptive behaviour	SA+	BESD	Y	YISP			10%	M
M	1011/30	AP	PEX	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4				E			D			D				0	0	0			26.09	8.11	12.46	15	15	(1)	(1)	12	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	S	BESD	Y	YISP	Affray + missing (for an hour)		10-20%	M
F	1011/31	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	3	4	5	5	5	D			E			D											16				(1)			SA+		Y		Arson (charged) + missing		10%	M
M	1011/32	AP		2	2	2	1	2	3	4	4	3	3	4	E			E			E														(1)	(1)			SA+				FW (damage to motor vehicle) + victim (robbery) + ASB (riding bike in antisocial manner)		10-20%	M
F	1011/33	AP		1	2	2	2	1	3	3	3	4	3	3	E			E			E				0	0	0	0.13 3.99 62.14 68.49	0.2 5.66 67.11 80.09	23.19	100	41.33	14	14	(2)	(1)	12	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour toward an adult	SA+	BESD	Y		Claimed to be sexual victim - disproved + witness (assault) + making 2 false claims of rape.		30-40%	M
M	1011/34	AP	PEX	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	4	4	5	4	D			E			D				0	0	0	6.26 27.79 84.4 87.77	8.69 35.41 87.3 92.31	41.18	29.73	82	15	25	(1)	(1)	11	Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	SA+		Y	YISP	Charged (handling stolen property) + ASB + bailed (taking pedal cycle) + criminal damage + suspected (burglary) + Bail (assault) + associates with known criminals.		10%	M
F	1011/35	AP		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	A	A	A	E			E			E						14												S	MLD/BESD	Y				30-40%	L
M	1011/36	AP							3	4	3		4	4	E			D			E				0	0	0					62				(1)			SA+				Charged (assault) + Emotional incident in home (no money for drugs)		10-20%	M
M	1011/37	AP	PEX	2	2	2	2	2	4	5	5	5	6	5	D			D	C	E	C				34	28	28					73.65				(1)			SA+							
M	1011/38	AP	PEX	2	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	3	4	4	E			F			E				0	0	0					95				(1)			SA+				Victim (packaging drugs for parents 'business' (drugs & loan sharks)		10%	M
F	1011/39	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	B	A	B	D			D			D				0	0	0			34.78	0	23.77	7	7		(2)			SA+	OTH/BESD					20-30%	L
M	1011/40	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	A	A	F	D	D	E	D	D	E					50	62	31			33.58	42.11	34.39	5	5	(1)	(1)			SA+	BESD	Y				30-40%	L
F	1011/41	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	5				C	D	C	D	D	D	C				74	74	41					13.16	25	5	5		Out of County: EHE			SA+						10%	M

IMD (Indices of multiple deprivation) L = least, M = most

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Gender	Student identifier	Class group	PEX Status	Key stage 1 Speak & Listening	Reading	Writing	Maths	Science	KS2 Eng	Math	Sci	KS3 Eng	Math	Sci	Baseline Sept 12 English	Maths	IT	KS4 English Predicted	Target	Actual	Maths Predicted	Target	Actual	Sci-Biol Predicted	Target	Actual	Functional Skills Predicted	Target	Actual	IT Predicted	Target	Actual	Points Estimated	Actual	Average prior to placement	%Att Autumn '11	Spring '12	Summer	year summary	Modified TT protocol	Hours offered provision	total Hours accounted	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Age at 1st exclusion	Reason for exclusion/ placement	SEN	SEN need	EWS	CAF/ TAC	YOS	Police	CiC	Free School Meals	IMD
F	1112/1	PRU	PEX	2	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	2	3	L	EL3	EL2	EL3	E		G	E		G	E	U								P	66		59.59	76.5	61.2				25	25	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU	15 years old and in Yr 9	Permanently excluded from BRJ on 15.12.09 due to aggressive behaviour towards a member of staff.	SA+				Y	Reprimand (assault) + Suspect (assault/theft) + at risk due to friend being on sexual exploitation register		20-30%	M
M	1112/2	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	A	A	A	EL2	L1	L1	E	E		D	D		D	F									P	84		41.89	86	53.3				25	25		(1) + KS3 PRU		Reprimand (arson)	SA+	BESD	Y		Y			20-30%	L
M	1112/3	PRU	PEX																																			100	95.2				25	25		(1)	15	Physical assault against a pupil						Suspect (malicious wounding) + member of a local gang. Well known to police.		20-30%	M
M	1112/4	PRU		1	1	1	2	2	4	4	4	3	4	4						E												P	106		7.37	0					25	25		(1) + KS3 PRU			SA+	BESD	Y			Reprimand (assault) + ASB		20-30%	M
M	1112/5	PRU		2	2	2	3	2	4	4	5	A	A	A	EL3	L1	L1	C		C			C										P	60			64.5	50.2				25	25				ASB (trespass)								40-50%	M
F	1112/6	PRU													EL2	EL1	EL3	L1		L1					P									12			94	93.5				25	25												10%	M
M	1112/7	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	A	A	A	EL3	L1	L1	D		D	E		D	E		P							P	112		38.85	83	60				25	25	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU			SA+	BESD	Y		Y			10-20%	M
M	1112/8	PRU		2	1	1	2	2	3	3	5				EL2	EL2	EL3	C		C	E		C	D		P							P	66			82.5	54.4				25	25	(1)	(1)		Witness (robbery)								10-20%	M
M	1112/9	PRU		2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	A	A	A						D				F		P					P					21.15	48					25	25		(1) + KS3 PRU			SA+	BESD	Y		Y			10%	M
F	1112/10	PRU		2	1	2	1	2	4	4	5				EL3	EL3	L1	L1		L1														21.88	71	48.6				5	5		(1) + KS3 PRU		Charged (assault - violent) + 'sex for weed' + theft	SA+	BESD		Y	Y		Y	10%	M
M	1112/11	PRU	PEX	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	4	4	5	5				D		C	F		C												35					25	25		(1)	14 years old in year 10	Permanently excluded from Ercall Wood on 28.01.2011 for verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult.								10%	M
M	1112/12	PRU	PEX	2	1	1	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	EL3	L1	L1	D		D	E		D			P						P	94			84	82.5				25	25		(2)	15 years old and in year 10	Permanently excluded from Sutherland on 14.03.11 for persistent disruptive behaviour.						Suspect (disorderly behaviour)		10-20%	M
M	1112/13	PRU																																										Assault (on mother) + Final Warning (possession: drugs) + Reprimand and Community Resolution (criminal damage and theft)								20-30%	M
F	1112/14	PRU															L1	D		D			D													82	96.9				25	25				Witness (domestic violence)								10%	M
M	1112/15	PRU		2	2	2	3	2	4	5	4	4	6	4				D		C			D													49.5	12.1				25	15		(2) + KS3 PRU	14 years old and in year 9	Permanently excluded from Sutherland 22.03.2010 for verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult.	SA+	BESD	Y		Y	Reprimand (criminal damage)		10-20%	M
M	1112/16	AP	PEX	3	3	2	3	3	4	5	5	4	6	4				D		C			C												13.28	80.5	80				25	25		(1)		Domestics' at house.								40-50%	M
M	1112/17	AP		2	2	2	3	2	4	5	5	4	6	4				D		C			D													82	59				25	17.5		(1)		Suspect (burglary) + Reprimand (handling stolen property)	SA+	BESD	Y		Y			10%	M
M	1112/18	AP		3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	A	A	A				D		D			D	F											34.21	64	53.1				25	20		(1) + KS3 PRU		Criminal damage + shoplifting + Less then safe associates - on the fringes of youth crime	SA+	BESD						10%	M
M	1112/19	AP		W	W	W	W	W	3	N	N	A	3	A				E		E	G		E	U						P	88		26.21																							
F	1112/20	AP		2	2	2	2	2																												0							0		Known to police - family member suspect (theft)					Y			10%	M
M	1112/21	AP		2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	EHE	EHE	EHE				E		D			D													53.5	19.1				25	20		EHE+ KS3 PRU		Witness to crime +Final Warning (verbally and physically abusive when parents were trying to get him to attend school)	SA+	BESD	Y					30-40%	M
F	1112/22	AP																D		D			D													39.5	41.6				25	15				ABC + charged with handling + Final Warning and Reprimand for Actual Bodily Harm (ABH) + shoplifting + victim of rape					YOS			10-20%	M
M	1112/23	AP							A	4	4							E		E			E												11.32	0								EHE/Traveller; KS3 PRU			SA+	BESD	Y					30-40%	L
F	1112/24	AP		2	2	2	2	2	4	3	4	EHE	EHE	EHE				D		E			D												74.08	24					25	25	(1)	(1)		Victim (indecent, obscene messages) + Victim of SOPO (Sex Offenders Prevention Order) + 4 Reprimands (shoplifting spree) + High Risk register + Missing Person.	SA+	BESD	Y					10%	M
F	1112/25	AP	PEX	2	2	2	2	At risk	3	N	3	A	A	A				E		E			E												31.72	40	4.1				25	5	(2)	(1)	14 years old in year 10	Permanently excluded from on Abraham Darby on 14 July 2010 for verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult.	SA+	BESD	Y			Subject (Risk Management Plan) + At risk of sex exploitation + FW (disorderly behaviour) + Reprimanded (common assault and theft) + shoplifting		10%	M
M	1112/26	School		1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3							C		C			C												31.84						25	25	(2)	(1) + KS3 PRU		Known to police - domestic incidents	SA+				Y			10-20%	M
F	1112/27	School	PEX	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	3	4	4	5				D		D			C																					(1)	15	Physical assault against a pupil								30-40%	M
M	1112/28	School	PEX															C		C			C							P						100					25	25		(1)	15 years old and in year 10	Permanently excluded from Sutherland on 17/03/11 for persistent disruptive behaviour								20-30%	M
M	1112/29	School	PEX	W	W	W	W	W	3	2	3	3	2	4				E		E	G		E	G											76.63						25	25		(1) + KS3 PRU	8 years old and in yr 3	Permanently excluded from Dawley Primary in October 2002 due to aggressive and disruptive behaviour.	SA+	BESD				Domestic (witness) + Missing person		10%	M

The detailed data

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Gender	Student identifier	Class group	PEX Status	KS1 Speak & Listening	KS1 Reading	KS1 Writing	KS1 Maths	KS1 Science	KS2 Eng	KS2 Math	KS2 Sci	KS3 Eng	KS3 Math	KS3 Sci	Baseline English	Baseline Maths	Baseline IT	Eng Predicted	Eng Target	Eng Actual	Maths Predicted	Maths Target	Maths Actual	Sci/Biol Predicted	Sci/Biol Target	Sci/Biol Actual	Attend prior to placement	Attend Autumn	Attend Spring	Hours offered provision	Hours total accounted	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Age at 1st exclusion	Reason for exclusion/ placement	EWS	YOS	Police	Free School Meals	IMD	L=least/M=most
M	1213/1	PRU																											45.8	25	25	(2)	(1) + EHE			Y	YOS	Final Warning (ABH) + (common assault)		30-40%	M
M	1213/2	PRU		1	1	1	2	2	3	5	5	O	O	O	EL2	EL3	L1	D			B			B			15	32	12.2	25	25	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU					ASB + Bailed (cannabis possession and robbery) + On police radar but not charged.	Y	20-30%	M
M	1213/3	PRU		2	2	2	3	2	3	4	4	Z	Z	Z	EL2	EL3	L1	D			C			C			95	87	94.7	25	25	(1)	KS3 PRU					ABC (harrassement - throwing missiles) + criminal damage + Family causes big problems in the neighbourhood	Y	10%	M
F	1213/4	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	4	EL2	EL2	EL3	D			E			D			70	65	69.5	25	25	(2)	(1) + KS3 PRU					Witness (domestic violence)		10%	M
M	1213/5	PRU										4	5	4				D			C			D					28.3	25	25	(2)	(3) + Out of County PRU + KS3 PRU			Y				10-20%	M
F	1213/6	PRU		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	EL2	EL2		E			D			D			12	58	62.1	25	25	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU					2 charges of ABH + charged with criminal damage + Final Warnings for shoplifting (8instances, a spree) + On bail.	Y	10%	M
F	1213/7	PRU	PEX	2	2	2	2b	2							EL3	L1	L1	D			D			D				70	82.5	25	25	(1)	(2)	12	Assault on Staff			Common assault + police called to 'domestics' at home address.		20-30%	M
M	1213/8	PRU																												25	25		(1)					ABC (nuisance behaviour) + 2 Final Warnings (theft of pedal cycle) + 2 Reprimands (disorderly behaviour and criminal damage)		10-20%	M
M	1213/9	PRU		2	2	2	2	3	2	4	3				EL3	EL3	L1	C			C			D			5	33.3		25	25	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU + EHE					Charge (criminal damage) + assault + 4 charges of shoplifting.	Y	10-20%	M
M	1213/10	PRU																											73.8	25	25		(1) + EHE					Bailed (assault)		10-20%	L
F	1213/11	PRU	PEX																											25	25	(1)	(1)	15	Possession of Class B drug in school		YOS	Reprimand (possession of controlled drugs) + theft		20-30%	M
M	1213/12	PRU		2	3	2	3	2	4	4	4	Z	Z	Z	EL3	L1	EL3	C			C			C			72	84	77	25	25	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU				YOS	Charged (robbery with attempt to cause GBH) + Final Warning (criminal damage) + Final Warning (ABH) + Reprimand (affray)		10%	M
M	1213/13	AP		2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	Z	Z	Z	EL2	EL2	EL2	E			C			C			19	54	21.6	25	20	(2)	(1) + KS3 PRU					Defendent (criminal damage) + Reprimand (theft) + victim (pedal cycle theft) + involved in drugs issues, not charged.	Y	10%	M
F	1213/14	AP	PEX																									50	25	7.5		(1)	13	Not stated			Victim + missing person.		10%	M
F	1213/15	AP	PEX	1	1	1	1	1	N	N	3	O	O	O				E			E			D			74	82.5	59.7	25	15	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU	14	Persistent, disruptive behaviour			Known to police; sexually active	Y	10%	M
F	1213/16	AP																												25	25	(1)	(2)					Recorded as vulnerable: underage drinking/alcohol; possible victim of rape; domestic abuse (family) + theft + ABH		10%	M
M	1213/17	AP	PEX									5	4	4				C			D			D			0	55.5	19.4	25	7.5	(2)	(1) + KS3 PRU	14	Persistent, disruptive behaviour			Self harmer; recorded as Autistic/ADHD		20-30%	L
M	1213/18	AP	PEX	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	Z	Z	Z	EL1		EL2	E			E			D			32	45.5	10.5	25	15	(1)	(1) + KS3 PRU	13	Physical assault on a pupil			Final Warnings and a Reprimand for criminal damage/harrassment + violent assault	Y	10%	M
M	1213/19	AP		2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	5	EL2	EL3	L1	E			D			C			38	71.5	79.8	25	15	(3)	(1) + KS3 PRU					Witness + victim	Y	30-40%	M
M	1213/20	School		2	2	2	2	2	4	4	5	Z	Z	Z	EL3	L1	L1	C			C			B			95	92.5	95.1	25	25							Known to police.		40-50%	L

Key stage 1 · Key Stage 2 · Key Stage 3 · Baseline (Sept 12) · Key Stage 4 - current education performance/provision · Key Stage 4 - Contextual Information · % Attendance · School information · Poverty Indicators · IMD (Indicies of multiple deprivation) L = least, M = most

Students' Interview Questions Appendix H

The Curriculum:
What do you like/don't like about the subjects on offer?
Which lessons are you most/least likely to be late to?

Teachers:
Do you accept the idea that teachers know better about things?
Do you think of teachers as the enemy?
What causes you to be openly rude to some teachers and not others?
What do you think about those kids who just get on and do as they are asked?
How can you push teachers around without them coming down on you – can you tell when you have gone too far?

Careers:
How important is working hard in school to 'getting on' later?
How important to you are qualifications?
What is it you think you've got that the kids in mainstream school haven't?
Are you looking forwards to working?
What sort of jobs do you have in mind?

The Group:
How important is it to be one of the group?
What's good/what's not?
Are there any rules between you all?
How does someone become 'top-dog'?
What is it about them that make other students follow their lead?
Which three students do you most like to choose to work with?
Which three students are you least likely to choose to work with?
Which three students are you most likely to work best with?

Behaviour:
Why is having a 'laff ' important to some students?
What does having a 'laff' mean to you?
What effect does having a 'laff' have on your teachers?
What is the opposite of boredom?
When did things start to go wrong in school – what happened to you?
Have you been bullied?
Have you been a bully?
What do you think about bullying?
What is the fascination with mobile phones?
Why do students use so much sexually explicit language/toilet talk?
What do our girls think of our boys and vice versa?
Does it make a difference to the way students behave if they have a regular boy/girl friend?

Recreation/leisure:
How do you and your friends spend your time when you aren't in school?
If you were better off – what difference would it make to you?
What would you like that you can't have now?

Police:
Do you think of the police as helpful or the enemy?

Parents:
What do your parents think about teachers and school?

What do your parents think about the way you behave in school and at home?

Those with jobs already:
Does it make a difference to the way students behave if they have a job?
What do you think about the people who employ you – what's important?
What makes a good employer?
How are bosses different or similar to teachers?

Staff Interview Questions   Appendix I

For common understanding, the following definitions are offered:

Class: '... large scale groupings of people who share common economic resources which strongly influence the type of lifestyle they are able to lead' *(Giddens, 2008, p300);*

Culture: '... is the way the social relations of a group are structured and shaped; but it is also the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted' *(Clarke et al 1976, p11);*

Resistance: '... those forms of disaffiliation ... which were in some sense challenges to and negotiations of the dominant order ...' *(Stuart Hall 1996, p293)*

1. What do you think our students think about:

The curriculum at the PRU }	
Teachers in general }	Where do you think their ideas come
Work/careers }	from? (in terms of Class? Culture?)
The group/class }	
Gender differences in the classroom }	
Behaviour }	What/who reinforces their views?
Parents opinions }	(in terms of Class? Culture?
Recreation and leisure }	Significant Adults/Peers?)

2. Are those students with jobs any different? If so, in what ways?

3. Do the students gravitate towards key individuals? If they do can you identify why this happens?

4. "It has been ... widely claimed that streaming, traditional-based curriculum planning, exams and general achievement orientation are likely to be conducive to the emergence of anti-school or semi-delinquent groups among the lower forms ..." *(Willis, 1977)* Is this the case now-a-days?

5. How do you engage with the PRU students? How are your strategies at the PRU different to those you used in mainstream? How do you know you have got through?

6. 'The teacher still has the mastery of formal words and expression. It is an area increasingly abandoned by the lads.' *(Willis, 1977)* How important is the acquisition of language to our students, what influences their choice of language?

7. When you are asked by managers to do something you don't want to do or don't agree with, how do you handle it?

8. Why have you chosen to work in a PRU rather than mainstream?

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